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47.

GOETHE

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE¹

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 1749-1832

GOETHE was born August 28, 1749, at Frankfurt-on-Main. His father was a lawyer of independent means and an imperial councillor; his mother was the daughter of the mayor of Frankfurt. The first sixteen years of his life were spent almost entirely at home, where he gained some acquaintance with the Bible and the classics, Italian, Hebrew, English, music, and drawing.

In 1765 Goethe began his preparation for the law by attending the University of Leipzig. However, it was literature rather than law that occupied him. Moved by his love for a young woman, he began to turn "everything which rejoiced or troubled me into a picture or a poem." A serious breakdown of his health in 1768 cut short his stay at Leipzig. After a long period of convalescence, much of which was devoted to the study of Paracelsus, alchemy, and "natural magic," Goethe went to Strasbourg, where in 1771 he completed his legal training.

While at Strasbourg, Goethe became acquainted with Herder, who, he later remarked, "tore down the curtain which had covered the poverty of German literature." Together they studied Gothic architecture, read Homer, Shakespeare, Ossian, and folk-song, and discussed a new German literature. When Goethe returned to Frankfurt in 1771, he had schemes for dramas and various literary works but no strong desire to practise law. That same year he began his first important work, the drama celebrating the sixteenth century robber-knight, *Götz von Berlichingen*. After a period of several months spent at the imperial courts at Wetzlar, where he knew and loved Lotte Buff, Goethe produced his novel, *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774), written "as by a somnambulist" in four weeks' time. Both the *Werther* and the *Götz*, published a year previously, had an enormous success and inaugurated the literary movement known as *Sturm und Drang* (Storm and Stress). They found many imitators throughout Europe; even the clothes that Werther wore became the fashion; and for a long time thereafter Goethe was known only as the "author of Werther."

Goethe once remarked: "I am like a snake, I slough my skin and start afresh." In 1775, in the midst of his literary triumph, he accepted the invitation of Duke Karl August and moved to the court at Weimar, which was to remain his home for the rest of his life. He was reproached by his friends for abandoning his literary talents, and he soon became so involved with duties of state that for the next ten years he spent little time in writing. He was not long in Weimar before he was entrusted with almost all the offices of the tiny State. As councillor of legation, he attended the privy council and the trial of prisoners. He also had charge of the war and finance commissions as well as the administration of roads, mines, and forests. In 1782 he was raised to the nobility by the emperor and a short time later became president of the chamber.

Partly in connection with his new duties at Weimar, Goethe revived the interest in science that he had first shown at Strasbourg. He took up again the study of anatomy and in 1784 discovered that the intermaxillary bone exists in man in a rudimentary form, thus contributing to the development of the evolutionary doctrine. His experiments with the structure and growth of plants provided him with the material later incorporated in his *Metamorphoses of Plants*. He also began his work in optics.

Although eminently successful in carrying out his practical duties, Goethe came to regret them as a "terrible disease" which kept him from writing, and "grievously disturbed my creative power." In 1786, determined to escape them for a time, he set out for Italy, disguised as a merchant under the name of Möller. For twenty-two months he remained in Italy and felt that he "found himself again as an artist." Under the influence of what he regarded as the classical spirit, he resolved, "I will occupy myself only with lasting conditions, such as we see in the Greek statues." With that inspiration he re-worked and completed many of the books he had begun previously, including *Iphigenie auf Tauris*, *Torquato Tasso*, and *Egmont*.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

After his return to Weimar in 1788, Goethe found it impossible to resume his former life. "My outer man," he wrote, "could not accustom itself to the change." His Italian sojourn had separated him from Charlotte von Stein, whom he had loved for twelve years, and to the scandal of Weimar he took into his house Christine Vulpius, a young factory worker, whom he finally married in 1806. His new classic dramas attracted little attention, and Germany seemed to like only the *Sturm und Drang* literature, which he felt he had left far behind. Schiller had then begun his rise to literary fame, and Goethe at the time felt Schiller was in every way his opposite. He was delighted, however, when Schiller invited him in 1794 to contribute to a new review he was starting. Shortly afterwards, their meeting occurred, inaugurating a friendship which was to last until the younger poet's death in 1805.

Largely under Schiller's influence, Goethe returned to literature with renewed interest. Together they wrote the *Xenian*, attacking the literary foibles of their time. Goethe, to some extent inspired the plays of Schiller, which he produced as the director of the ducal theater. He wrote *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* (1796), the epic idyll, *Hermann and Dorothea*, and a number of poems. He was also persuaded to resume work upon the Faust legend, which he had begun to dramatize as early as 1774. He had published a fragment of

it in 1790. At the constant urging of Schiller he now completed the first part, which was published in 1808. It immediately won an enthusiastic reception, even from those most opposed to the classicism of the Weimar school.

After Schiller's death Goethe ceased to take any active part in the literary movements of his day, although he continued to direct the Weimar theatre until 1817 and was the recognized dean of German literature. Nor was he much involved with the great political events of his time. He tended to regard Napoleon as the defender of civilization against the Slavs, and in the interview between the two men at Erfurt in 1808 the poet reciprocated the admiration of the French conqueror, who began the meeting by exclaiming: "*Vous êtes un homme.*" Goethe still continued to produce a great volume of literary work of all kinds. In 1810 he brought out his *Theory of Color*. The following year he began his autobiography, under the title of *Poetry and Truth*. *Wilhelm Meister's Travel Years* first appeared in 1821.

In 1824 Goethe returned to work on the second part of *Faust*, and by 1832 the poem was completed. Although often interrupted, the composition of *Faust* had taken Goethe almost sixty years. Shortly after its completion, on March 31, Goethe died. He was buried beside Karl August in the ducal vault at Weimar, to which the remains of Schiller were also removed.

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DEDICATION

Ye wavering forms draw near again as ever
When ye long since moved past my clouded eyes.
To hold you fast, shall I this time endeavour?
Still does my heart that strange illusion prize?
Ye crowd on me! 'Tis well! Your might assever 5
While ye from mist and murk around me rise.
As in my youth my heart again is bounding,
Thrilled by the magic breath your train surrounding.

Ye bring with you glad days and happy faces.
Ah, many dear, dear shades arise with you; 10
Like some old tale that Time but half erases,
First Love draws near to me and Friendship too.
The pain returns, the sad lament retraces
Life's labyrinthine, erring course anew
And names the good souls who, by Fortune cheated 15
Of lovely hours, forth from my world have fled.

They do not hear the melodies I'm singing,
The souls to whom my earliest lays I sang;
Dispersed that throng who once to me were clinging,
The echo's died away that one time rang. 20
Now midst an unknown crowd my grief is ringing,
Their very praise but gives my heart a pang,
While those who once my song enjoyed and flattered,
If still they live, roam through the wide world scattered.

And I am seized with long-unwonted yearning 25
Toward yonder realm of spirits grave and still.
My plaintive song's uncertain tones are turning
To harps acolian murmuring at will.
Awe binds me fast; tear upon tear falls burning,
My stern heart feels a gentle, tender thrill; 30
What I possess, as if far off I'm seeing,
And what has vanished, now comes into being.

PRELUDE ON THE STAGE

MANAGER. DRAMATIC POET. JESTER.

Manager. Yc two that have so often stood by me

In time of need and tribulation,

Come, say: what hope in any German nation

For what we undertake have ye?

I much desire to give the crowd a pleasure,

In chief, because they live and let us live.

The posts, the boards are up, and here at leisure

The crowd expects a feast in what we'll give.

They're sitting now with eyebrows raised,

Quite calmly there, would gladly be amazed.

I know how one can make all minds akin,

Yet so embarrassed I have never been.

In truth, accustomed to the best they're not,

But they have read a really awful lot.

How shall we plan that all be fresh and new

And with a meaning, yet attractive too?

For I do like to see them crowding, urging,

When toward our booth the stream sets in apace

And with its powerful, repeated surging

Pours through the strait and narrow gate of grace,¹

When still in broad daylight, ere it is four,

They fight and push their way up to the wicket

And as the famine-stricken at the baker's door

They nearly break their necks to get a ticket.

This miracle, upon such varied folk, the poet

Alone can work; today, my friend, oh, show it!

Poet. I beg you, of that motley crowd cease telling

At sight of whom the spirit takes to flight!

Enveil from me the billowing mass compelling

Us to its vortex with resistless might.

No, lead me to the tranquil, heavenly dwelling

Where only blooms for poets pure delight,

Where Love and Friendship give the heart their blessing,

With godlike hand creating and progressing.

Ah, all that from the bosom's depths sprang flowing,

All that from shy and stammering lips has passed,

Sometimes success and sometimes failure knowing,

To each wild moment's power a prey is cast.

Oft only after years, in credit growing,

¹ Cf. Matthew, 7. 14.

Doth it appear in perfect form at last.
What gleams is born but for the moment's pages;
The true remains, unlost to after-ages.

Jester. Could I but hear no more of after-ages! 75

Suppose the thought of them *my* mind engages,
Who'd give the present world its fun?
That will it have and ought to have it too.
The presence of a gallant chap, revealed to you,
I think, is also worth while being shown. 80

Who pleasantly can just himself impart,
Is not embittered by the people's whim;
He likes to have a crowd surrounding him,
More certainly to stir and thrill each heart.
So do be good, show you can set the fashion. 85

Let Fantasy be heard with all her chorus:
Sense, Reason, Sentiment, and Passion;
Yet mark you well! bring Folly too before us!

Manager. But, more than all, do let enough occur! 90
Men come to look, to see they most prefer.

If, as they gaze, much is reeled off and spun,
So that the startled crowd gapes all it can,
A multitude you will at once have won;
You then will be a much-loved man.
You can compel the mass by mass alone; 95

Each in the end will seek out something as his own.
Bring much and you'll bring this or that to everyone
And each will leave contented when the play is done.
If you will give a piece, give it at once in pieces!
Ragout like this your fame increases. 100

Easy it is to stage, as easy to invent.
What use is it, a whole to fashion and present?
The Public still will pick it all to pieces.

Poet. You do not feel how bad such handiwork must be, 105
How little that becomes the artist true!

I see, neat gentlemanly botchery
Is now a sovereign rule with you.

Manager. Reproof like this leaves me quite unoffended!
A man who does his work, effectively intended,
Must stick to tools that are the best for it. 110

Reflect! You have a tender wood to split;
And those for whom you write, just see!
If this one's driven hither by ennui,
Another leaves a banquet sated with its vapours;
And—what the very worst will always be— 115

Many come fresh from reading magazines and papers.
Men haste distraught to us as to the masquerade,
And every step but winged by curiosity;
The ladies give a treat, all in their best arrayed,

- And play their part without a fee. 120
 Why do you dream in lofty poet-land?
 Why does a full house make you gay?
 Observe the patrons near at hand!
 They are half cold, half coarse are they.
 One, when the play is over, hopes a game of cards; 125
 A wild night on a wench's breast another chooses.
 Why then, with such an aim, poor silly bards,
 Will you torment so much the gracious Muses?
 Give only more and ever, ever more, I say.
 Then from the goal you nevermore can stray. 130
 Seek to bewilder men—that is my view.
 But satisfy them? That is hard to do.—
 What is attacking you? Pain or delight?
- Poet.* Go hence and seek yourself another slave!
 What! Shall the poet take that highest right, 135
 The Right of Man, that Right which Nature gave,
 And wantonly for your sake trifle it away?
 How doth he over every heart hold sway?
 How doth he every element enslave?
 Is it not the harmony that from his breast doth start, 140
 Then winds the world in turn back in his heart?
 When Nature forces lengths of thread unending
 In careless whirling on the spindle round,
 When all Life's inharmonic throngs unblending
 In sullen, harsh confusion sound, 145
 Who parts the changeless series of creation,
 That each, enlivened, moves in rhythmic time?
 Who summons each to join the general ordination,
 In consecrated, noble harmonies to chime?
 Who bids the storm with raging passion lower? 150
 The sunset with a solemn meaning glow?
 Who scatters Springtime's every lovely flower
 Along the pathway where his love may go?
 Who twines the verdant leaves, unmeaning, slighted,
 Into a wreath of honour, meed of every field? 155
 Who makes Olympus sure, the gods united?
 That power of Man the Poet has revealed!
- Jester.* Then use these handsome powers as your aid
 And carry on this poet trade
 As one a love-adventure carries! 160
 By chance one nears, one feels, one tarries!
 And, bit by bit, one gets into a tangle.
 Bliss grows, then comes a tiff, a wrangle;
 One is enrapt, now one sees pain advance,
 And ere one is aware, it is a real romance! 165
 So let us also such a drama give!
 Just seize upon the full life people live!

Each lives it though it's known to few,
 And grasp it where you will, there's interest for you.
 In motley pictures with a little clarity, 170
 Much error and a spark of verity,
 Thus can the best of drinks be brewed
 To cheer and edify the multitude.
 Youth's fairest bloom collects in expectation
 Before your play and harks the revelation. 175
 Then from your work each tender soul, intent,
 Absorbs a melancholy nourishment.
 Then now one thought and now another thought you start;
 Each sees what he has carried in his heart.
 As yet they are prepared for weeping and for laughter; 180
 They still revere the flight, illusion they adore.
 A mind once formed finds naught made right thereafter;
 A growing mind will thank you evermore.

Poet. Then give me back the time of growing
 When I myself was growing too, 185
 When crowding songs, a fountain flowing,
 Gushed forth unceasing, ever new;
 When still the mists my world were veiling,
 The bud its miracle bespoke;
 When I the thousand blossoms broke, 190
 Profusely through the valleys trailing.
 Naught, yet enough had I when but a youth,
 Joy in illusion, yearning toward the truth.
 Give impulse its unfettered dower,
 The bliss so deep 'tis full of pain, 195
 The strength of hate, Love's mighty power,
 Oh, give me back my youth again!

Jester. Youth, my good friend, you need most in the fight
 When enemies come on, hard pressing,
 When, clinging to your necks so tight, 200
 The dearest maidens hang caressing,
 When, from afar, a wreath entrances,
 Luring to hard-won goal the runner's might,
 When, after madly whirling dances,
 A man carousing drinks away the night. 205
 But on the lyre's familiar strings
 To play with grace and spirit ever
 And sweep with lovely wanderings
 Toward goals you choose for your endeavour,
 That is your duty, aged sirs, 210
 And we revere you for it no less dearly.
 Age makes not childish, as one oft avers;
 It finds us still true children merely.

Manager. Words have been interchanged enough,
 Let me at last see action too. 215

While compliments you're turning—idle stuff!
Some useful thing might come to view.

Why talk of waiting for the mood?

No one who dallies ever will it see.

If you pretend you're poets—good!

220

Command then, poets, poetry!

What we're in need of, that full well you know,

We want to sip strong drink, so go

And start the brew without delay!

Never is done tomorrow what is not done today

225

And one should let no day slip by.

With resolution seize the possible straightway

By forelock and with quick, courageous trust;

Then holding fast you will not let it further fly

And you will labour on because you must.

230

Upon our German stage, you are aware,

Each tries out what he wishes to display,

So in your work for me today

Scenes, mechanism you are not to spare.

Use both the lights of heaven, great and small;

235

The stars above are yours to squander;

Nor water, fire, nor rocky wall,

Nor beasts nor birds are lacking yonder.

Thus in our narrow house of boards preside

And on through all Creation's circle stride;

240

And wander on, with speed considered well,

From Heaven, through the world, to Hell!

PROLOGUE IN HEAVEN¹

The LORD. The HEAVENLY HOSTS.
Afterwards MEPHISTOPHELES.

The THREE ARCHANGELS come forward.

- Raphael.* The Sun intones, in ancient tourney
With brother-spheres, a rival song,
Fulfilling its predestined journey, 245
With march of thunder moves along.
Its aspect gives the angels power,
Though none can ever solve its ways;
The lofty works beyond us tower,
Sublime as on the first of days. 250
- Gabriel.* And swift beyond where knowledge ranges,
Earth's splendour whirls in circling flight;
A paradise of brightness changes
To awful shuddering depths of night.
The sea foams up, widespread and surging 255
Against the rocks' deep-sunken base,
And rock and sea sweep onward, merging
In rushing spheres' eternal race.
- Michael.* And rival tempests roar and shatter,
From sea to land, from land to sea, 260
And, raging, form a circling fetter
Of deep, effective energy.
There flames destruction, flashing, searing,
Before the crashing thunder's way;
Yet, Lord, Thy angels are revering 265
The gentle progress of Thy day.
- The Three.* Its aspect gives the angels power,
Since none can solve Thee nor Thy ways;
And all Thy works beyond us tower,
Sublime as on the first of days. 270
- Mephistopheles.* Since you, O Lord, once more draw near
And ask how all is getting on, and you
Were ever well content to see me here,
You see me also midst your retinue.
Forgive, fine speeches I can never make, 275
Though all the circle look on me with scorn;
Pathos from me would make your sides with laughter shake,
Had you not laughter long ago forsworn.
Of suns and worlds I've naught to say worth mention.

¹ Cf. Job, 1. 6-12.

- How men torment them claims my whole attention. 280
 Earth's little god retains his same old stamp and ways
 And is as singular as on the first of days.
 A little better would he live, poor wight,
 Had you not given him that gleam of heavenly light.
 He calls it Reason, only to pollute 285
 Its use by being brutaler than any brute.
 It seems to me, if you'll allow, Your Grace,
 He's like a grasshopper, that long-legged race
 That's made to fly and flying spring
 And in the grass to sing the same old thing. 290
 If in the grass he always were reposing!
 But in each filthy heap he keeps on nosing.
- The Lord.* You've nothing more to say to me?
 You come but to complain unendingly?
 Is never aught right to your mind? 295
- Mephistopheles.* No, Lord! All is still downright bad, I find.
 Man in his wretched days makes me lament him;
 I am myself reluctant to torment him.
- The Lord.* Do you know Faust?
Mephistopheles. The Doctor?
The Lord. Yes, my servant!
Mephistopheles. He!
- Forsooth, he serves you most peculiarly. 300
 Unearthly are the fool's drink and his food;
 The ferment drives him forth afar.
 Though half aware of his insensate mood,
 He asks of heaven every fairest star
 And of the earth each highest zest. 305
 And all things near and all things far
 Can not appease his deeply troubled breast.
- The Lord.* Although he serves me now confusedly,
 I soon shall lead him forth where all is clear.
 The gardener knows, when verdant grows the tree,
 That bloom and fruit will deck the coming year. 310
- Mephistopheles.* What will you wager? Him you yet shall lose,
 If you will give me your permission
 To lead him gently on the path I choose.
- The Lord.* As long as on the earth he shall survive, 315
 So long you'll meet no prohibition.
 Man errs as long as he doth strive.
- Mephistopheles.* My thanks for that, for with the dead I've never got
 Myself entangled of my own volition.
 I like full, fresh checks best of all the lot. 320
 I'm not at home when corpses seek my house;
 I feel about it as a cat does with a mouse.
- The Lord.* 'Tis well! So be it granted you today!
 Divert this spirit from its primal source

And if you can lay hold on him, you may
Conduct him downward on your course, 325

And stand abashed when you are forced to say:

A good man, though his striving be obscure,

Remains aware that there is one right way.

Mephistopheles. All right! But long it won't endure! 330

I have no fear about my bet, be sure!

When I attain my aim, do not protest,

But let me triumph with a swelling breast.

Dust shall he eat, and that with zest,

As did the famous snake, my near relation.¹ 335

The Lord. In that too you may play your part quite free;

Your kind I never did detest.

Of all the spirits of negation

The wag weighs least of all on me.

Mankind's activity can languish all too easily, 340

A man soon loves unhampered rest;

Hence, gladly I give him a comrade such as you,

Who stirs and works and must, as devil, do.

But ye, real sons of God, lift up your voice,

In living, profuse beauty to rejoice! 345

May that which grows, that lives and works forever,

Engird you with Love's gracious bonds, and aught

That ever may appear, to float and waver,

Make steadfast in enduring thought!

Heaven closes, the ARCHANGELS disperse.

Mephistopheles [alone]. I like to see the Old Man not infrequently, 350

And I forbear to break with Him or be uncivil;

It's very pretty in so great a Lord as He

To talk so like a man even with the Devil.

¹ Cf. Genesis, 3. 14.

The First Part OF THE TRAGEDY



NIGHT

In a high-vaulted, narrow Gothic chamber FAUST,
restless in his chair by his desk.

Faust. I've studied now Philosophy
And Jurisprudence, Medicine, 355
And even, alas! Theology
All through and through with ardour keen!
Here now I stand, poor fool, and see
I'm just as wise as formerly.
Am called a Master, even Doctor too, 360
And now I've nearly ten years through
Pulled my students by their noses to and fro
And up and down, across, about,
And see there's nothing we can know!
That all but burns my heart right out. 365
True, I am more clever than all the vain creatures,
The Doctors and Masters, Writers and Preachers;
No doubts plague me, nor scruples as well.
I'm not afraid of devil or hell.
To offset that, all joy is rent from me. 370
I do not imagine I know aught that's right;
I do not imagine I could teach what might
Convert and improve humanity.
Nor have I gold or things of worth,
Or honours, splendours of the earth. 375
No dog could live thus any more!
So I have turned to magic lore,
To see if through the spirit's power and speech
Perchance full many a secret I may reach,
So that no more with bitter sweat 380
I need to talk of what I don't know yet,
So that I may perceive whatever holds
The world together in its inmost folds,
See all its seeds, its working power,
And cease word-threshing from this hour. 385
Oh, that, full moon, thou didst but glow
Now for the last time on my woe,
Whom I beside this desk so oft

Have watched at midnight climb aloft.
 Then over books and paper here 390
 To me, sad friend, thou didst appear!
 Ah! could I but on mountain height
 Go onward in thy lovely light,
 With spirits hover round mountain caves,
 Weave over meadows thy twilight laves, 395
 Discharged of all of Learning's fumes, anew
 Bathe me to health in thy healing dew.

Woel am I stuck and forced to dwell
 Still in this musty, cursèd cell?
 Where even heaven's dear light strains 400
 But dimly through the painted panes!
 Hemmed in by all this heap of books,
 Their gnawing worms, amid their dust,
 While to the arches, in all the nooks,
 Are smoke-stained papers midst them thrust, 405
 Boxes and glasses round me crammed,
 And instruments in cases hurled,
 Ancestral stuff around me jammed—
 That is your world! That's called a world!

And still you question why your heart 410
 Is cramped and anxious in your breast?
 Why each impulse to live has been repressed
 In you by some vague, unexplained smart?
 Instead of Nature's living sphere
 In which God made mankind, you have alone, 415
 In smoke and mould around you here,
 Beasts' skeletons and dead men's bone.

Up! Flee! Out into broad and open land!
 And this book full of mystery,
 From Nostadamus' very hand, 420
 Is it not ample company?
 The stars' course then you'll understand
 And Nature, teaching, will expand
 The power of your soul, as when
 One spirit to another speaks. 'Tis vain 425
 To think that arid brooding will explain
 The sacred symbols to your ken.
 Ye spirits, ye are hovering near;
 Oh, answer me if ye can hear!

He opens the book and perceives the sign of the Macrocosm.
 What rapture, ah! at once is flowing 430
 Through all my senses at the sight of this!
 I feel a youthful life, its holy bliss,
 Through nerve and vein run on, new-glowing.
 Was it a god who wrote these signs that still
 My inner tumult and that fill 435

My wretched heart with ecstasy?
 Unveiling with mysterious potency
 The powers of Nature round about me here?
 Am I a god? All grows so clear to me!
 In these pure lineaments I see
 Creative Nature's self before my soul appear.
 Now first I understand what he, the sage, has said:
 "The world of spirits is not shut away;
 Thy sense is closed, thy heart is dead!
 Up, Student! bathe without dismay
 Thy earthly breast in morning-red!"

440

445

He contemplates the sign.

Into the whole how all things blend,
 Each in the other working, living!
 How heavenly powers ascend, descend,
 Each unto each the golden vessels giving!¹
 On pinions fragrant blessings bringing,
 From Heaven through Earth all onward winging,
 Through all the All harmonious ringing!

450

What pageantry! Yet, ah, mere pageantry!
 Where shall I, endless Nature, seize on thee?
 Thy breasts are—where? Ye, of all life the spring,
 To whom both Earth and Heaven cling,
 Toward whom the withering breast doth strain—
 Ye gush, ye suckle, and shall I pine thus in vain?

455

*He turns the book over impatiently and perceives the sign of the
 EARTH-SPIRIT.*

How differently upon me works this sign!
 Thou, Spirit of the Earth, I feel, art nigher.
 I feel my powers already higher,
 I glow already as from some new wine.
 I feel the courage, forth into the world to dare;
 The woe of earth, the bliss of earth to bear;
 With storms to battle, brave the lightning's glare;
 And in the shipwreck's crash not to despair!
 Clouds gather over me—

460

465

The moon conceals her light—
 The lamp fades out!
 Mists rise—red beams dart forth
 Around my head—there floats
 A horror downward from the vault
 And seizes me!

470

Spirit invoked! near me, I feel, thou art!
 Unveil thyself!
 Ha! how it rends my heart!
 To unknown feeling
 All my senses burst forth, reeling!

475

¹ Cf. Genesis, 28. 12.

I feel my heart is thine and to the uttermost!

480

Thou must! Thou must! though my life be the cost!

He clutches the book and utters the sign of the SPIRIT in a tone of mystery. A ruddy flame flashes up; the SPIRIT appears in the flame.

Spirit. Who calls to me?

Faust [*turning away*]. Appalling apparition!

Spirit. By potent spell hast drawn me here,

Hast long been tugging at my sphere,

And now—

Faust. Oh woe! I can not bear thy vision!

485

Spirit. With panting breath thou hast implored this sight,

Wouldst hear my voice, my face wouldst see;

Thy mighty spirit-plea inclineth me!

Here am I—what a pitiable fright

Grips thee, thou Superman! Where is the soul elated?

490

Where is the breast that in its self a world created

And bore and fostered it? And that with joyous trembling

Expanded as if spirits, us, resembling?

Where art thou, Faust, whose voice rang out to me,

Who toward me pressed with all thy energy?

495

Is it thou who, by my breath surrounded,

In all the deeps of being art confounded?

A frightened, fleeing, writhing worm?

Faust. Am I, O form of flame, to yield to thee in fear?

'Tis I, I'm Faust, I am thy peer!

500

Spirit. In the tides of life, in action's storm,

Up and down I wave,

To and fro weave free,

Birth and the grave,

An infinite sea,

505

A varied weaving,

A radiant living,

Thus at Time's humming loom it's my hand that prepares

The robe ever-living the Deity wears.

Faust. Thou who dost round the wide world wend,

510

Thou busy spirit, how near I feel to thee!

Spirit. Thou art like the spirit thou canst comprehend,

Not me!

Vanishes.

Faust [*collapsing*]. Not thee!

Whom then?

515

I, image of the Godhead!

And not even like to thee!

Somebody knocks.

O death! I know it—'tis my famulus—

Thus turns to naught my fairest bliss!

That visions in abundance such as this

520

Must be disturbed by that dry prowler thus!

WAGNER *in dressing-gown and night-cap, a lamp in his hand.*

FAUST *turns round impatiently.*

Wagner. Pardon! I've just heard you declaiming.

'Twas surely from a Grecian tragic play?

At profit in this art I'm also aiming;

For much it can effect today.

525

I've often heard the boast: a preacher

Might take an actor as his teacher.

Faust. Yes, if the preacher is an actor, there's no doubt,

As it indeed may sometimes come about.

Wagner. Ah! if thus in his study one must stay,

530

And hardly sees the world upon a holiday,

Scarce through a telescope, and far off then,

How through persuasion shall one lead one's fellow-men?

Faust. Unless you feel, naught will you ever gain;

Unless this feeling pours forth from your soul

535

With native, pleasing vigour to control

The hearts of all your hearers, it will be in vain.

Pray keep on sitting! Pray collect and glue,

From others' feasts brew some ragout;

With tiny heaps of ashes play your game

540

And blow the sparks into a wretched flame!

Children and apes will marvel at you ever,

If you've a palate that can stand the part;

But heart to heart you'll not draw men, no, never,

Unless your message issue from your heart.

545

Wagner. Yet elocution makes the orator succeed.

I feel I am still far behind indeed.

Faust. Seek for the really honest gain!

Don't be a fool in loudly tinkling dress!

Intelligence and good sense will express

550

Themselves with little art and strain.

And if in earnest you would say a thing,

Is it needful to chase after words? Ah, yes,

Your eloquence that is so glittering,

In which you twist up gewgaws for mankind,

555

Is unrefreshing as the misty wind,

Through withered leaves in autumn whispering.

Wagner. Ah, God! how long is art!

And soon it is we die.

Oft when my critical pursuits I ply,

560

I truly grow uneasy both in head and heart.

How hard to gain the means whereby

A man mounts upward to the source!

And ere man's ended barely half the course,

Poor devil! I suppose he has to die.

565

Faust. Parchment! Is that the sacred fountain whence alone

There springs a draught that thirst for ever quells?
Refreshment? It you never will have won
If from that soul of yours it never wells.

Wagner. Excuse me! But it is a great delight 570
To enter in the spirit of the ages and to see
How once a sage before us thought and then how we
Have brought things on at last to such a splendid height.

Faust. Oh, yes! Up to the stars afar!
My friend, the ages of aforetime are 575
To us a book of seven seals.¹
What you call "spirit of the ages"
Is after all the spirit of those sages
In which the mirrored age itself reveals.

Then, truly, that is oft a sorry sight to see! 580
I vow, men do but glance at it, then run away.
A rubbish-bin, a lumber-garret it may be,
At best a stilted, mock-heroic play
With excellent, didactic maxims humming,
Such as in puppets' mouths are most becoming. 585

Wagner. But, ah, the world! the mind and heart of men!
Of these we each would fain know something just the same.

Faust. Yes, "know"! Men call it so, but then
Who dares to call the child by its right name? 590
The few who have some part of it descried,
Yet fools enough to guard not their full hearts, revealing
To ruffraff both their insight and their feeling,
Men have of old burned at the stake and crucified.
I beg you, friend, it's far into the night,
We must break off our converse now. 595

Wagner. I'd gladly keep awake for ever if I might
Converse with you in such a learned way;
Tomorrow, though, our Easter-Sunday holiday,
This and that question you'll allow.
I've studied zealously, and so 600
I know much now, but all I fain would know.

Exit.

Faust [alone]. How strange a man's not quitted of all hope,
Who on and on to shallow stuff adheres,
Whose greedy hands for hidden treasure grope,
And who is glad when any woin appears! 605
Dare such a human voice resound
Where spirits near me throng around?
Yet still I thank you, poorest one
Of all the sons of earth, for what you've done.
Torn loose by you, from that despair I'm freed
That nearly drove my senses frantic. 610
That vision, ah! was so gigantic,

¹ Cf. Revelation, 5. 1.

I could but feel myself a dwarf indeed.

I, image of the Godhead, and already one
Who thought him near the mirror of the Truth Eternal,
Who revelled in the clearness, light supernal,
And stripped away the earthly son;
I, more than cherub, whose free force
Presumed, prophetic, even now to course,
Creating, on through Nature's every vein,
To share the life of gods: that!—how must I atone!
A voice of thunder swept me back again.

615

620

I may not dare to call myself thy peer!
What though I had the might to draw thee near,
To hold thee I possessed no might.
At that ecstatic moment's height
I felt so small, so great;
Thou cruelly didst thrust me back as one
Doomed to uncertain human fate.

625

Who will instruct me? And what shall I shun?
Shall I that impulse then obey?
Alas! the deeds that we have done—
Our sufferings too—impede us on life's way.

630

To what the mind most gloriously conceives,
An alien, more, more alien substance cleaves.
When to the good of this world we attain,
We call the better a delusion vain.
Sensations glorious, that gave us life,
Grow torpid in the world's ignoble strife.

635

Though Fantasy with daring flight began
And hopeful toward Infinity expanded,
She's now contented in a little span
When in Time's eddy joy on joy's been stranded.
For Worry straightway nestles deep within the heart,
There she produces many a secret smart.
Recklessly rocking, she disturbs both joy and rest.
In new disguises she is always dressed;
She may appear as house and land, as child and wife,
As fire, as water, poison, knife.
What never will happen makes you quail,
And what you'll never lose, always must you bewail.

640

645

650

I am not like the gods! Feel it I must.
I'm like the worm that burrows through the dust,
That in the dust in which it lived and fed,
Is crushed and buried by a wanderer's tread.

655

Is it not dust that narrows in this lofty wall
Made up of shelves a hundred, is it not all
The lumber, thousandfold light frippery,
That in this world of moths oppresses me?
Here shall I find what is my need?

660

Shall I perchance in a thousand volumes read
 That men have tortured themselves everywhere,
 And that a happy man was here and there?—
 Why grinnest thou at me, thou hollow skull?
 Save that thy brain, confused like mine, once sought bright day 665
 And in the sombre twilight dull,
 With lust for truth, went wretchedly astray?
 Ye instruments, ye surely jeer at me,
 With handle, wheel and cogs and cylinder.
 I stood beside the gate, ye were to be the key. 670
 True, intricate your ward, but no bolts do ye stir.
 Inscrutable upon a sunlit day,
 Her veil will Nature never let you steal,
 And what she will not to your mind reveal,
 You will not wrest from her with levers and with screws. 675
 You, ancient lumber, that I do not use,
 You're only here because you served my father.
 On you, old scroll, the smoke-stains gather,
 Since first the lamp on this desk smouldered turbidly.
 Far better had I spent my little recklessly 680
 Than, burdened with that little, here to sweat!
 All that you have, bequeathed you by your father,
 Earn it in order to possess it.
 Things unused often burden and beset;
 But what the hour brings forth, that can it use and bless it. 685
 Why does my gaze grow fixed as if a spell had bound me?
 That phial there, is it a magnet to my eyes?
 Why does a lovely light so suddenly surround me
 As when in woods at night the moonbeam drifts and lies?
 Thou peerless phial rare, I welcome thee 690
 And now I take thee down most reverently.
 In thee I honour human wit and art.
 Thou essence, juice of lovely, slum'brous flowers,
 Thou extract of all deadly, subtle powers,
 Thy favour to thy Master now impart! 695
 I look on thee, and soothed is my distress;
 I seize on thee, the struggle groweth less.
 The spirit's flood-tide ebbs away, away.
 I'm beckoned out, the open seas to meet,
 The mirror waters glitter at my feet, 700
 To other shores allures another day.
 A fiery chariot floats on airy pinions
 Hither to me! I feel prepared to flee
 Along a new path, piercing ether's vast dominions
 To other spheres of pure activity. 705
 This lofty life, this ecstasy divinest
 Thou, but a worm, and *that* deservest thou?
 Yes! turn thy back with resolution fine

Upon earth's lovely sun, and now
 Make bold to fling apart the gate 710
 Which every man would fain go slinking by!
 Here is the time to demonstrate
 That man's own dignity yields not to gods on high;
 To tremble not before that murky pit
 Where fantasies, self-damned, in tortures dwell; 715
 To struggle toward that pass whose narrow mouth is lit
 By all the seething, searing flames of Hell;
 Serenely to decide this step and onward press,
 Though there be risk I'll float off into nothingness.

So now come down, thou goblet pure and crystalline! 720
 From out that ancient case of thine,
 On which for many a year I have not thought!
 Thou at my fathers' feasts wert wont to shine,
 Didst many a solemn guest to mirth incline,
 When thee, in pledge, one to another brought. 725
 The crowded figures, rich and artful wrought,
 The drinker's duty, rhyming to explain them,
 The goblet's depths, at but one draught to drain them,
 Recall full many a youthful night to me.
 Now to no neighbour shall I offer thee, 730
 Upon thy art I shall not show my wit.
 Here is a juice, one's quickly drunk with it.
 With its brown flood it fills thy ample bowl.
 This I prepared, I choose this, high upborne;
 Be this my last drink now, with all my soul, 735
 A festal, lofty greeting pledged to morn!

He puts the goblet to his lips.

The sound of bells and choral song.

Chorus of Angels.

Christ is arisen!
 Joy to mortality,
 Whom earth's carnality,
 Creeping fatality, 740
 Held as in prison!

Faust. What a deep humming, what a clarion tone,
 Draws from my lips the glass with mighty power!
 Ye deep-toned bells, make ye already known
 The Easter-feast's first solemn hour? 745
 Ye choirs, do ye the hymn of consolation sing,
 Which angels sang around the grave's dark night, to bring
 Assurance of new covenant and dower?

Chorus of Women.

Rare spices we carried
 And laid on His breast; 750
 We tenderly buried

Him whom we loved best;
Cloths and bands round Him,
Spotless we wound Him o'er;¹
Ah! and we've found Him, 755
Christ, here no more.

Chorus of Angels.

Christ is ascended!
Blessèd the loving one
Who endured, moving one,
Trials improving one, 760
Till they were ended!

Faust. Ye heavenly tones, so powerful and mild,
Why seek ye me, me cleaving to the dust?
Ring roundabout where tender-hearted men will hear!
I hear the message well but lack Faith's constant trust; 765
The miracle is Faith's most cherished child.
I do not dare to strive toward yonder sphere
From whence the lovely tidings swell;
Yet, wanted to this strain from infancy,
Back now to life again it calleth me. 770
In days that are no more, Heaven's loving kiss
In solemn Sabbath stillness on me fell;
Then rang prophetic, full-toned, the bell;
And every prayer was fervent bliss.
A sweet, uncomprehending yearning 775
Drove me to wander on through wood and lea,
And while a thousand tears were burning,
I felt a world arise for me.
Of youth's glad sports this song foretold me,
The festival of spring in happy freedom passed; 780
Now memories, with childlike feeling, hold me
Back from that solemn step, the last.
Sound on and on, thou sweet, celestial strain!
The tear wells forth, the earth has me again!

Chorus of Disciples.

Though He, victorious, 785
From the grave's prison,
Living and glorious,
Nobly has risen,
Though He, in bliss of birth,
Creative Joy is near, 790
Ah! on the breast of earth
We are to suffer here.
He left His very Own
Pining for Him we miss;
Ah! we bemoan, 795
Master, Thy bliss!

¹Cf. John, 19. 40; Mark, 16. 1; Luke, 23. 56.

Chorus of Angels.

Christ is arisen
 Out of Corruption's womb!
 Burst bonds that prison,
 Joy over the tomb! 800
 Actively pleading Him,
 Showing love, heeding Him,
 Brotherly feeding Him,
 Preaching, far speeding Him,
 Rapture succeeding Him, 805
 To you the Master's near,
 To you is here!

OUTSIDE THE GATE OF THE TOWN

All sorts of people are walking out

Some Young Workmen. Why are you going off that way?

Others. We're going to the Hunters' Lodge today.

The Former. But toward the Mill we'd like to wander. 810

Workman. Go to the River Inn, that's my advice.

A Second. The road that way is far from nice.

The Others. What will you do?

A Third. Go with them yonder.

A Fourth. Come up to Burgdorf! There you'll surely find

The prettiest girls and beer, the finest kind, 815

Besides a first-rate sort of scrap.

A Fifth. How you do swagger! What a chap!

Does your skin itch a third time for a row?

I will not go, I fear that place somehow.

Servant-Girl. No, no, I'll go back toward the town. 820

Another. We'll find him by those poplars certainly.

The First. But that is no great luck for me!

At your side he'll go walking up and down;

He never dances but with you.

With your fun what have I to do? 825

The Second. Today he's surely not alone; he said

His friend would be with him, the curly-head.

Student. By thunder! how the whacking wenches stride!

We must go with them, brother, come along.

Strong beer, tobacco with a bite, and, on the side, 830

A servant-maid decked out, for these I long.

Citizen's Daughter. I say, just see those fine young blades!

It really is an insult. See!

They could have had the best of company

And run here after serving-maids! 835

Second Student [to the first].

Not quite so fast! There come two others, there behind,

From the churches' venerable night,
 They are all brought out into light.
 See, only see, how quickly the masses
 Scatter through gardens and fields remote; 930
 How down and across the river passes
 So many a merry pleasure-boat.
 And over-laden, almost sinking,
 The last full wherry moves away.
 From yonder hill's far pathways blinking, 935
 Flash to us colours of garments gay.
 Hark! Sounds of village joy arise;
 Here is the people's paradise,
 Contented, great and small shout joyfully:
 "Here I am Man, here dare it to be!" 940

Wagner. Doctor, to walk with you is ever
 An honour and a profit, though
 I'd here not care to stray alone—no, never—
 Because to all that's vulgar I'm a foe.
 This fiddling, shrieking, bowling—all this revel 945
 To me's a sound detested long;
 They riot as if driven by the Devil,
 And call it a pleasure, call it a song.

Peasants under the linden tree. [Dance and song.]

The shepherd decked him for the dance,
 In ribbons, vest, and wreath to prance, 950
 Adorned with fine arraying.
 Now round the linden lass and lad
 Were thronging, dancing there like mad.
 Hurrah! Hurrah!
 Hurrah-a-rah-a-rah! 955
 Thus fiddle-bow was playing.

He crowded and he pushed in haste,
 Then bumped into a maiden's waist,
 Elbow against her laying.
 The lively damsel turned her head: 960
 "I find that stupid, now!" she said.
 Hurrah! Hurrah!
 Hurrah-a-rah-a-rah!

"Don't be so rude and swaying!"
 Then round and round they winged their flight, 965
 They danced to left, they danced to right,
 All petticoats displaying.

They grew so red, they grew so warm,
 Then rested panting, arm in arm,
 Hurrah! Hurrah! 970
 Hurrah-a-rah-a-rah!

On hip the elbow staying.

"I say, don't make so free with me!

THE FIRST PART

25

How many fooled his bride-to-be,
Deceiving and betraying!"

975

And yet he coaxed her to one side,
And from the linden far and wide:
Hurrah! Hurrah!

Hurrah-a-rah-a-rah!

Rang shouts and fiddle-playing.

980

Old Peasant. Good Doctor, this is fine of you,

That you don't scorn us here today,
And now amid this crowding throng,
A highly-learnèd man, you stray.

Hence take in turn the finest mug

985

That with a fresh, cool drink we've filled.

I pledge you, sir, and wish aloud

Not only that your thirst be stilled:

For every drop the mug conveys,

A day be added to your days!

990

Faust. I take the refreshing drink and thus I too

Return the health with thanks to all of you.

The people gather round in a circle.

Old Peasant. Forsooth, it is indeed well done

That you on happy days appear.

You have aforetime with us too

995

Been kind when days were evil here!

Full many a one stands here alive,

Whom your good father still did wrest

From burning fever's deadly rage

When he set limits to the pest.

1000

And you as well, a young man then,

To every sick man's house you went around.

Many a corpse did men bring forth,

But from within you came out sound,

Withstanding many a test severe;

1005

The Helper over us helped our helper here.

All. Health to the man whom we have tried,

Long may he be our help and guide!

Faust. To Him on High with reverence bend,

Who teaches help and help doth send!

1010

He goes on with WAGNER.

Wagner. Oh, what a feeling you must have, great man,

Thus venerated by this multitude!

Oh, happy he who, through his own gifts, can

Draw such a gain, such gratitude!

The father shows you to his brood,

1015

Each asks and hastes and nearer draws;

The fiddle stops, the dancers pause.

You go, they stand in rows to see.

The caps are quickly lifted high;

A little more and they would bend the knee 1020
 As if the Holy Sacrament came by.

Faust. Only a few steps farther, up to yonder stonel

Here let us rest a little from our straying.
 Here often, wrapped in thought, I sat alone
 And tortured me with fasting and with praying. 1025

In hope full rich, firm in the faith possessed,
 With tears, sighs, wringing hands, I meant
 To force the Lord in Heaven to relent
 And end for us the fearful pest.

The crowd's applause now sounds like scorn to me. 1030

Oh, could you but within me read

How little, son and father, we

Were worthy such a fame and meed!

My father was a simple, worthy man,
 Who over Nature and her every sacred zone, 1035

Quite honestly, in his odd plan

Mused with a wayward zeal that was his own,

Who, with adepts their presence lending,

Shut him in that black kitchen where he used,

According to receipts unending, 1040

To get the contraries together fused.

There was a lover bold, a lion red,

Who to the lily in a tepid bath was wed.

Both, tortured then with flames, a fiery tide,

From one bride-chamber to another pass. 1045

Thereon appeared, with motley colours pied,

The youthful queen within the glass.

Here was the medicine; the patients died,

And no one questioned: who got well?,

Thus we with hellish nostrums, here

Within these mountains, in this dell, 1050

Raged far more fiercely than the pest.

I gave the poison unto thousands, ere

They pined away; and I must live to hear

The shameless murderers praised and blessed. 1055

Wagner. How can you give yourself to such lament?

Does not a good man do his part

In practising transmitted art

Exactly and with good intent?

If you revere your father as a youth,

Gladly from him you will receive; 1060

If as a man you further knowledge and the truth,

Then can your son a higher goal achieve.

Faust. Oh, happy he who still hopes that he can

Emerge from Error's boundless sea!

What man knows not, is needed most by man, 1065

And what man knows, for that no use has he.

- But what fair blessing that this hour can show
 Let's not with mournful thoughts like these embitter!
 Behold how in the evening sunset-glow 1070
 The green-encircled hamlets glitter.
 The sun retreats—the day, outlived, is o'er—
 It hastens hence and lo! a new world is alive!
 Oh, that from earth no wing can lift me up to soar
 And after, ever after it to strive! 1075
 I'd see in that eternal evening beam,
 Beneath my feet, the world in stillness glowing
 Each valley hushed and every height agleam,
 The silver brook to golden rivers flowing.
 The mountain wild with all its gorges 1080
 Would hinder not the godlike course for me;
 Before astounded eyes already surges,
 With bays yet warm, the open sea.
 And yet at last the god seems to 'be sinking;
 But new impulse awakes, to light 1085
 I hasten on, eternal brightness drinking,
 Before me day, behind me night,
 Above me heaven, and under me the billow.
 A lovely dream, the while the glory fades from sight.
 Alas! To wings that lift the spirit light 1090
 No earthly wing will ever be a fellow.
 Yet 'tis inborn in everyone, each fancies
 His feeling presses upward and along,
 When over us lost amid the blue expanses
 The lark sings down his showering song, 1095
 When over rough heights of firs and larches
 The outspread eagles soaring roam,
 And over lakes and over marshes
 The crane strives onward toward his home.
- Wagner.* I've often had capricious, odd hours of my own, 1100
 Yet such an impulse I have never known.
 One's sated soon if on the woods and fields he look;
 I'll never envy any bird his wing.
 How differently the joys of spirit bring
 Us on from page to page, from book to book! 1105
 Then winter nights become so sweet and fair,
 A blessèd life warms up our every limb;
 And ah! if one unrolls a parchment really rare,
 The whole of Heaven descends on him.
- Faust.* By one impulse alone are you impressed. 1110
 Oh, never learn to know the other!
 Two souls alas! are dwelling in my breast;
 And each is fain to leave its brother.
 The one, fast clinging, to the world adheres
 With clutching organs, in love's sturdy lust; 1115

The other strongly lifts itself from dust
 To yonder high, ancestral spheres.
 Oh, are there spirits hovering near,
 That ruling weave, twixt earth and heaven are rife,
 Descend! come from the golden atmosphere 1120
 And lead me hence to new and varied life!

Yea! were a magic mantle only mine,
 To bear me to strange lands at pleasure,
 I would not barter it for costliest treasure,
 Not for the mantle of a king resign. 1125

Wagner. Oh, call them not, the well-known swarms
 That streaming spread throughout the murky air;
 In every quarter they prepare
 A danger for mankind in a thousand forms,
 Sharp spirit-fangs press from the north 1130
 Upon you here with arrow-pointed tongues;
 And from the east, now parching, they come forth
 And feast themselves upon your lungs;
 And when the south wind from the desert drives
 Those that heap glow on glow upon your brain, 1135
 The west wind brings the swarm that first revives,
 Then drowns you and the field and plain.
 They like to hear, on mischief gaily bent,
 They like to hearken, for they like to try
 To fool us, pose as if from Heaven sent, 1140
 And lisp like angels when they lie.

But let us go! The world's already grey,
 The air grows chill, the mists of evening fall!
 'Tis now we treasure home the most of all—
 Why do you stand and stare? What is the trouble? 1145
 What in the gloaming seizes you in such a way?

Faust. You see that black dog streaking through the grain and stubble?

Wagner. I saw him long since; not important did he seem to me.

Faust. Observe him well! What do you take the beast to be?

Wagner. Why, just a poodle; in his way he's worrying 1150
 In his attempt to find his master's traces.

Faust. But do you note how in wide spiral rings he's hurrying
 Around us here and ever nearer chases?
 And if I err not, there's a trail behind him!
 Along his path a fiery eddy flies. 1155

Wagner. Only a plain black poodle do I see. Don't mind him!
 I think it's an illusion of your eyes.

Faust. He seems in magic nooses to be sweeping
 Around our feet, a future snare to bind.

Wagner. I see he doubts, he's timidly around us leaping, 1160
 Two strangers—not his master—does he find.

Faust. The circle narrows; he's already near!

Wagner. You see a dog! It is no spectre here.

THE FIRST PART

29

He snarls and doubts, now on his belly see him crawl,

He wags his tail, dog-habits all.

1165

Faust. Come here! And be a friend with us!

Wagner. It is a beast and, poodle-like, ridiculous.

Stand quiet and he'll sit up too;

Speak to him and he'll scramble up on you;

Lose something and he'll bring it back again,

1170

Leap into water for your cane.

Faust. You're likely right. I find no trace remaining

Of any spirit; it is all mere training.

Wagner. By any dog, if he but be well trained,

Even a wise man's liking may be gained,

1175

Yes, he deserves your favour thoroughly,

A clever pupil of students, he.

They go into the gateway of the town.

STUDY

Faust [entering with the poodle].

Meadow and field have I forsaken,

That deeps of night from sight enroll;

A solemn awe the deeps awaken,

1180

Rousing in us the better soul.

No wild desires can longer win me,

No stormy lust to dare and do;

The love of all mankind stirs in me,

The love of God is stirred anew.¹

1185

Be quiet, poodle! Don't make such a riot!

Why at the threshold do you sniff the air?

Lie down behind the stove in quiet!

My best of cushions I will give you there.

As on the hillside pathway, leaping

1190

And running about, you amused us best,

So take now too from me your keeping,

But as a welcome, silent guest.

Ah, when the friendly lamp is glowing

Again within our narrow cell,

1195

Through heart and bosom light comes flowing

If but the heart knows itself well.

Then Reason once again discourses

And Hope begins to bloom again;

Man yearns to reach life's flowing sources,

1200

Ah! to the Fount of Life attain.

¹ Cf. Spinoza, *Ethics*, v. 20.

Snarl not, you poodle! To the sacred strain
That now doth all my soul surround,
Is suited not that bestial sound.

We know full well that men deride whate'er
They do not understand

1205

And that before the Good and Fair,
Which oft is hard for them, they grumble;
And will the dog, like them too, snarl and bumble?

But ah! I feel already, with a will the best,

1210

Contentment wells no longer from my breast.
But wherefore must the stream so soon run dry
And we again thus thirsting lie?

I have experienced this in ample measure.

And yet this feeling has its compensation;

1215

We learn the supernatural to treasure.

Our spirits yearn toward revelation

That nowhere glows more fair, more excellent,
Than here in the New Testament.

To open the fundamental text I'm moved,

1220

With honest feeling, once for all,

To turn the sacred, blest original

Into my German well-beloved.

He opens a volume and applies himself to it.

'Tis written: "In the beginning was the Word!"

Here now I'm balked! Who'll put me in accord?

1225

It is impossible, the *Word* so high to prize,

I must translate it otherwise

If I am rightly by the Spirit taught.

'Tis written: In the beginning was the *Thought!*

Consider well that line, the first you see,

1230

That your pen may not write too hastily!

Is it then *Thought* that works, creative, hour by hour?

Thus should it stand: In the beginning was the *Power!*

Yet even while I write this word, I falter,

For something warns me, this too I shall alter.

1235

The Spirit's helping me! I see now what I need

And write assured: In the beginning was the *Deed!*

If I'm to share this room with you,

Poodle, then leave off howling,

Then leave off growling!

1240

Such a distracting fellow I can't view

Or suffer to have near me.

One of us two, or I or you,

Must quit this cell, I fear me.

I'm loath your right as guest thus to undo.

1245

The door is open, you've a passage free.

But what is this I now must see!

Can that happen naturally?

THE FIRST PART

31

Is it phantom? Is it reality?
 How long and broad the poodle grows! 1250
 He rises up in mighty pose,
 'Tis not a dog's form that he shows!
 What spectre have I sheltered thus?
 He's like a hippopotamus
 With fiery eyes, jaws terrible to see. 1255
 Oh, mine you are most certainly.
 For such as your half-hellish crew
 The Key of Solomon will do.¹

Spirits [in the corridor].

Captured is someone within!
 Stay without, none follow in! 1260
 Like a fox in a snare
 Quakes an ancient hell-lynx there.
 But now give heed!
 Hover hence, hither hover,
 Under, over, 1265
 And he soon himself has freed.
 Can ye avail him,
 Oh, do not fail him!
 For he has already done
 Much to profit us, each one. 1270

Faust. First, to deal with this beast's core,
 I will use the Spell of Four:

Salamander must be glowing,
 Undine self-coiling,
 Sylph vanish in going, 1275
 Kobold keep toiling.

Who would ignore
 The elements four,
 Their powers
 And dowers, 1280
 No master he
 Over spirits can be.

Vanish in fiery glow,
 Salamander!
 Gurgling, together flow, 1285
 Undine!
 In meteoric beauty shine,
 Sylph!
 Bring homely help,

¹A book containing directions for exorcizing the four elements.

Incubus! Incubus! 1290
 Step forth and end the charm for us.

None of the Four
 Hides in the beast.
 He lies quite calmly, grins evermore;
 I've not yet hurt him in the least. 1295
 Thou'lt hear me longer
 Conjure thee stronger!

Art thou, fellow, one
 That out of Hell has run?
 Then see this Sign! 1300
 Before which incline
 Black cohorts e'er!
 It swells up now with bristling hair.

Thou reprobated,
 Canst rede His token? 1305
 The Ne'er-originated,
 The Never-spoken,
 Who every Heaven has permeated,
 He! wantonly immolated!¹

Behind the stove, held by my spells, 1310
 Like an elephant it swells,
 And all the space it fills complete.
 In vapour it will melt away.

Mount not up to the ceiling! Lay
 Thyself down at thy Master's feet! 1315
 I threaten not in vain as thou canst see.
 With holy fire I'll shrivel thee!

Do not await
 The light thrice radiate!
 Do not await 1320
 The strongest art at my command!

MEPHISTOPHELES steps forth from behind the stove while the vapour is vanishing. He is dressed as a travelling scholar.

Mephistopheles. Wherefore this noise? What does my lord command?

Faust. So this, then, was the kernel of the brute!

A travelling scholar it is? The *casus* makes me smile.

Mephistopheles. To you, O learned sir, I proffer my salute! 1325
 You made me sweat in vigorous style.

Faust. What is your name?

Mephistopheles. The question seems but cheap
 From one who for the Word has such contempt,

¹ Cf. Ephesians, 4. 10; John, 19. 34; Revelation, 1. 7.

Who from all outward show is quite exempt
And only into beings would delve deep.

1330

Faust. The being of such gentlemen as you, indeed,
In general, from your titles one can read.
It shows itself but all too plainly when men dub
You Liar or Destroyer or Beëlzebub.¹
Well now, who are you then?

Mephistopheles. Part of that Power which would
The Evil ever do, and ever does the Good.

1335

Faust. A riddle! Say what it implies!

Mephistopheles. I am the Spirit that denies!
And rightly too; for all that doth begin
Should rightly to destruction run;
'Twere better then that nothing were begun.
Thus everything that you call Sin,
Destruction—in a word, as Evil represent—
That is my own, real element.

1340

Faust. You call yourself a part, yet whole you're standing there.

1345

Mephistopheles. A modest truth do I declare.

A man, the microcosmic fool, down in his soul
Is wont to think himself a whole,
But I'm part of the Part which at the first was all,
Part of the Darkness that gave birth to Light,
The haughty Light that now with Mother Night
Disputes her ancient rank and space withal,
And yet 'twill not succeed, since, strive as strive it may,
Fettered to bodies will Light stay.
It streams from bodies, it makes bodies fair,
A body hinders it upon its way,
And so, I hope, it has not long to stay
And will with bodies their destruction share.

1350

1355

Faust. Now I perceive your worthy occupation!

You can't achieve wholesale annihilation
And now a retail business you've begun.

1360

Mephistopheles. And truly thereby nothing much is done.

What stands out as the opposite of Naught—
This Something, this your clumsy world—for aught
I have already undertaken,

1365

It have I done no harm nor shaken
With waves and storms, with earthquakes, fiery brand.
Calm, after all, remain both sea and land.
And that accursèd trash, the brood of beasts and men,
A way to get at them I've never found.

1370

How many now I've buried in the ground!
Yet fresh, new blood forever circulates again.
Thus on and on—one could go mad in sheer despair!
From earth, from water, and from air

¹ Cf. John, 8. 44; Revelation, 9. 11; Matthew, 12. 24; Mark, 3. 22.

A thousand germs evolving start, 1375
 In dryness, moisture, warmth, and cold!
 Weren't it for fire which I withhold,
 I'd have as mine not one thing set apart.

Faust. So to that Power never reposing, 1380
 Creative, healing, you're opposing
 Your frigid devil's fist with might and main.
 It's clenched in spite and clenched in vain!
 Seek something else to undertake,
 You, Chaos' odd, fantastic son!

Mephistopheles. We'll really ponder on what can be done 1385
 When my next visits here I make.
 But may I for the present go away?

Faust. Why you should ask, I do not see. 1390
 Though we have only met today,
 Come as you like and visit me.
 Here is a window, here a door, for you,
 Besides a certain chimney-flue.

Mephistopheles. Let me own up! I cannot go away;
 A little hindrance bids me stay. 1395
 The witch's foot upon your sill I see.

Faust. The pentagram? That's in your way?
 You son of Hell explain to me,
 If that stays you, how came you in today?
 And how was such a spirit so betrayed?

Mephistopheles. Observe it closely! It is not well made; 1400
 One angle, on the outer side of it,
 Is just a little open, as you see.

Faust. That was by accident a lucky hit!
 And are you then my captive? Can that be?
 By happy chance the thing's succeeded! 1405

Mephistopheles. As he came leaping in, the poodle did not heed it.
 The matter now seems turned about;
 The Devil's in the house and can't get out.

Faust. Well, through the window—why not there withdraw?

Mephistopheles. For devils and for ghosts it is a law: 1410
 Where they slipped in, there too must they go out.
 The first is free, the second's slaves are we.

Faust. Does Hell itself have its laws then?
 That's fine! A compact in that case might be
 Concluded safely with you gentlemen? 1415

Mephistopheles. What's promised, you'll enjoy with naught
 subtracted,

With naught unduly snipped off or exacted.
 But that needs more than such a brief consideration
 And we'll discuss it soon in further conversation.
 But now, most earnestly I pray, 1420
 For this time let me go away.

Faust. One moment longer do remain;

Tell me at last some pleasant news.

Mephistopheles. Let me go now, I'll soon be back again;

Then you may question as you choose.

1425

Faust. I've never set a snare for you;

You walked, yourself, into this net tonight.

Let him who holds the Devil hold him tight!

He'll not so soon catch him anew.

Mephistopheles. If it so please you, I'm prepared, indeed,

1430

To lend you company, but take good heed:

It's on condition that my arts beguile

The time for you in worthy style.

Faust. I'll gladly see your arts, in that you're free,

Though only if you please with artistry!

1435

Mephistopheles. More for your senses, friend, you'll gain

In this one hour than you'd obtain

In a whole year's monotony.

All that the tender spirits sing you,

The lovely images they bring you,

1440

Are not an empty sorcery.

They will delight your sense of smell,

They will refresh your palate well,

And blissful will your feeling swell.

Of preparation there's no need,

1445

We're here together, so proceed!

Spirits.

Vanish, ye darkling

Vaultings above him!

More lovely gleaming,

Blue ether beaming,

1450

Gaze down, benign!

Now are the darkling

Clouds disappearing!

Faint stars are sparkling,

Gentler suns nearing

1455

Hitherward shine.

Graces, adorning

Sons of the morning,

Spirit-like, bending,

Wavering, hover.

1460

Yearning unending

Follows them over;

Ribbons a-trailing,

Fluttering, veiling,

Wide spaces cover,

1465

Cover the bower,

Where, with deep feeling,

Lovers are dreaming,

- Life-pledges sealing.
 Bower by bower! 1470
 Tendrils out-streaming!
 Heavy grape's gushing,
 In the vats plunging;
 Out from the cushioning
 Winepresses lunging, 1475
 Wine-streams are whirling;
 Foaming and purling
 Onward o'er precious
 Pure stones they wind them,
 Leave heights behind them, 1480
 Broad'ning to spacious
 Fair lakes, abounding
 Green hills surrounding.
 Wingèd creation,
 Sipping elation, 1485
 Sunward is fleeting,
 Bright islands meeting,
 Flying to meet them
 On the waves dancing,
 Rhythmic, entrancing, 1490
 Where we, to greet them,
 Hear a glad chorus,
 See o'er the meadows
 Dancers like shadows,
 Flitting before us, 1495
 Playing, regaling,
 Hills some are scaling;
 Others are swimming,
 Lakes swiftly skimming;
 Playfully trailing, 1500
 Other ones flitter,
 All for existent,
 All for the distant
 Stars as they glitter
 Rapturous Love. 1505
- Mephistopheles.* He sleeps! Well done, ye tender, airy throng!
 Ye truly lulled him with your song,
 And for this concert I am in your debt.
 You're not the man to keep the Devil captive yet!
 Enchant him with a dream's sweet imagery, 1510
 Plunge him into an ocean of untruth!
 But now, to break this threshold's sorcery,
 I have to get a rat's sharp tooth.
 To conjure long I do not need;
 Already one is rustling and it soon will heed. 1515
 The lord of all the rats and mice,

Of flies and frogs and bugs and lice,
 Bids you now venture to appear
 And gnaw upon this threshold here
 Where he is dabbing it with oil. 1520
 Already you come hopping forth. Now to your toil
 Quick to the work! The point that held me bound
 There on the outer edge is found.
 Just one bite more—'tis done! Begone!
 Now, Faustus, till we meet again, dream on! 1525
Faust awakening. Am I again a victim of delusion?
 That streaming throng of spirits—gone are they?
 Dreamt I the Devil through some mere illusion?
 Or did a poodle only leap away?

STUDY

FAUST. MEPHISTOPHELES.

Faust. A knock? Come in! Who now will bother me? 1530
Mephistopheles. 'Tis I.
Faust. Come in!
Mephistopheles. Full three times must it be.
Faust. Come in, then!
Mephistopheles. Fine! I like that! All is well!
 I hope we'll bear with one another and agree!
 For I, your every crotchet to dispel,
 Am here all dressed up like a noble squire, 1535
 In scarlet, gold-betrimmed attire:
 A little cloak of heavy silk brocade,
 Here on my hat a tall cock's-feather too,
 Here at my side a long and pointed blade;
 And now, to make it brief, I counsel you 1540
 That you too likewise be arrayed,
 That you, emancipated, free,
 Experience what life may be.
Faust. I'll feel, whatever my attire,
 The pain of life, earth's narrow way. 1545
 I am too old to be content with play,
 Too young to be without desire.
 What can the world afford me now?
 Thou shalt renounce! Renounce shalt thou!
 That is the never-ending song 1550
 Which in the ears of all is ringing,
 Which always, through our whole life long,
 Hour after hour is hoarsely singing.
 I but with horror waken with the sun,
 I'd fain weep bitter tears, because I see 1555
 Another day that, in its course, for me
 Will not fulfil one wish—not one,

Yea, that the foretaste of each joy possessed
 With carping criticism half erases,
 That checks creation in my stirring breast 1560
 With thousands of life's grinning faces.
 I too, when darkness sinks down o'er me,
 Must anxious stretch me on my bed;
 There, too, no rest comes nigh my weary head,
 For savage dreams will rise before me. 1565
 The god that dwells within my soul
 Can stir to life my inmost deeps.
 Full sway over all my powers he keeps,
 But naught external can he ever control.
 So Being like a load on me is pressed, 1570
 I long for death, existence I detest.

Mephistopheles. And yet Death never is a wholly welcome guest.

Faust. Ah, happy he around whose brow Death binds
 The blood-stained wreath mid victory's blaze,
 Whom in a maiden's arms Death finds 1575
 After a dance's maddening maze.
 Oh, would that I, beneath the lofty Spirit's sway,
 Enrapt, had rendered up my soul and sunk away!

Mephistopheles. And yet that night, those juices brown
 A certain man did not drink down. 1580

Faust. Spying is your delight, is that not so?

Mephistopheles. Omniscient am I not, yet many things I know.

Faust. Though, from the frightful frenzy reeling,
 A sweet, familiar tone drew me away,
 Though what remained of childlike feeling 1585
 Was duped by echoes of a happier day,
 I now curse all that, round the soul, enfolds it
 With dazzling lures and jugglery,
 And, banned within this cave of sorrows, holds it
 With blinding spells and flattery. 1590
 Cursed, before all, the high adherence
 To some opinion that ensnares the mind!
 Cursed be the blinding of appearance
 That holds our senses thus confined!
 Cursed be dissembling dream-obsessions, 1595
 The fraud of fame, a name's enduring life!
 Cursed all that flatters as possessions;
 As slave and plough, as child and wife!
 Cursed too be Mammon, when with treasures
 He stirs us on to deeds of might, 1600
 When he, for lazy, idle pleasures,
 Lays down for us the cushions right!
 Cursed be the grape's sweet juice deceiving!
 Cursed Love's supreme, delicious thrall!
 A curse on Hoping! on Believing! 1605

And cursed be Patience most of all!

Chorus of Spirits [invisible].

Woel! Woel!

Thou hast destroyed

The beautiful world,

With powerful fist;

1610

'Tis smashed, downward hurled!

A demigod dashed it to bits!

We're trailing

The ruins on to the Void,

And wailing

1615

Over the beauty lost and gone!

Mighty one

Midst the sons of earth,

Splendider

Build it again,

1620

Build it aloft in thy breast!

And life's new quest

Commence

With clearer sense,

And songs of cheer

1625

Anew shalt hear!

Mephistopheles.

These are the little folk

Of those whom I evoke.

Hark how they to joy and deed

Sagely bid you to give heed!

1630

Into life they would,

Far from solitude

There stagnate sap and sense,

Persuade and lure you hence.

Cease with your brooding grief to play

1635

That, like a vulture, eats your life away.

The worst of company will let you find

That you're a man among mankind.

But yet I don't mean that I'll thrust

You midst the rabble men don't trust.

1640

I'm not one of the Great;

Still, if through life you'll go with me,

In that case I'll agree

With pleasure to accommodate

You, on the spot belong to you.

1645

I'll be your comrade true

And if to your liking I behave,

I'll be your servant, be your slave!

Faust. And what in turn am I to do for you?

Mephistopheles. That is a long way off! Pray don't insist.

1650

Faust. No, no! The Devil is an egoist
 And not "for God's sake!" only will he do
 What will another's needs assist.
 Tell me your terms both plain and clear!
 Such servants in the house bring danger near. 1655

Mephistopheles. Here to your service I will bind me;
 Beck when you will, I will not pause or rest;
 But in return when *yonder* you will find me,
 Then likewise shall you be at my behest.

Faust. The *yonder* is to me a trifling matter. 1660
 Should you this world to ruins shatter,
 The other then may rise, its place to fill.
 'Tis from this earth my pleasure springs,
 And this sun shines upon my sufferings;
 When once I separate me from these things, 1665
 Let happen then what can and will.
 And furthermore I've no desire to hear
 Whether in future too men hate and love,
 And whether too in *yonder* sphere
 There is an *under* or *above*. 1670

Mephistopheles. In this mood you can dare to go my ways.
 Commit yourself; you shall in these next days
 Behold my arts and with great pleasure too.
 What no man yet has seen, I'll give to you.

Faust. Poor devil! What have you to give? 1675
 Was any human spirit, struggling to ascend,
 Such as your sort could ever comprehend?
 Still, have you food on which no man can live?
 Have you red gold that runs through, without rest,
 Quicksilver-like, the hand it's in? 1680
 A game at which men never win?
 A maiden who while on my breast
 Will with my neighbour ogle and conspire?
 The joys divine of honour, once possessed,
 Which vanish like a meteor's fire? 1685
 Show me the fruit which, ere it's plucked, will rot,
 And trees that every day grow green anew!

Mephistopheles. Such a commission frights me not;
 Such treasures I can serve to you.
 But, my good friend, the time approaches when we could 1690
 In peace and quiet feast on something good.

Faust. If ever I lay me on a bed of sloth in peace,
 That instant let for me existence cease!
 If ever with lying flattery you can rule me
 So that contented with myself I stay, 1695
 If with enjoyment you can fool me,
 Be that for me the final day!
 That bet I offer!

Mephistopheles. Done!

Faust. Another hand-clasp! There!

If to the moment I shall ever say:

"Ah, linger on, thou art so fair!"

1700

Then may you fetters on me lay,

Then will I perish, then and there!

Then may the death-bell toll, recalling

Then from your service you are free;

The clock may stop, the pointer falling,

1705

And time itself be past for me!

Mephistopheles. Consider well, we'll not forget it.

Faust. Your perfect right to that I'll not deny.

My action was not rash, I'll not regret it.

As soon as I stagnate, a slave am I,

1710

And whether yours or whose, why should I ask?

Mephistopheles. Then at a Doctor's-feast this very day

I'll act as servant and fulfil my task.

But one thing still: in case of life or death, I pray.

Give me a written line or two.

1715

Faust. What, pedant! Something written do you ask of me?

Was neither man nor word of man yet known to you?

Is it not enough that this my spoken word

Disposes of my days for all eternity?

Does not the world rush on, in all its currents stirred,

1720

And should a promise have a hold on me?

Yet to our hearts we've taken this conceit.

Who gladly would its hold undo?

Blest he whose bosom is with breachless faith replete,

No sacrifice will that man ever rue.

1725

But any stamped and written parchment sheet

Is like a ghost that all men shrink to view.

The spoken word dies forthwith in the quill;

Leather and wax remain our masters still.

What, Evil Spirit, do you want of me?

1730

Brass, marble, parchment, paper? Name it then!

Am I to write with graver, chisel, pen?

I offer you your choice quite free.

Mephistopheles. How can you talk so heatedly,

Exaggerate in such a way?

1735

Just any little sheet will do, it's all the same.

With one wee drop of blood you sign your name.

Faust. If this will satisfy you, then I say:

Let us agree and put the farce to this odd use.

Mephistopheles. Blood is a quite peculiar juice.

1740

Faust. Fear not! This league with you I shall not break!

The aim and goal of all my energy

Is to fulfil the promise I now make.

I've puffed myself too high, I see;

- Only within your ranks do I deserve to be. 1745
 The Mighty Spirit spurned me with a scoff,
 And Nature turns herself away from me.
 The thread of thought is broken off,
 To me all learning's long been nauseous.
 In depths of sensuality 1750
 Let us our glowing passions still
 In magic's veils impervious
 Prepared at once be every marvel's thrill!
 Come, let us plunge into Time's rushing dance,
 Into the roll of Circumstance! 1755
 There may then pain and joyance,
 Successes and annoyance,
 Alternately follow as they can.
 Only restlessly active is a man!
- Mephistopheles.* To you no goal is set, nor measure. 1760
 If you should like to nibble everything,
 To snatch up something on the wing,
 May all agree with you that gives you pleasure!
 Fall to, I say, and don't be coy.
- Faust.* You hear indeed, I do not speak of joy. 1765
 Life's wildering whirl be mine, its painfulest enjoyment,
 Enamoured hate, and quickening annoyance.
 My bosom, of all thirst for knowledge cured,
 Shall close itself henceforth against no woe;
 Whatever to all mankind is assured, 1770
 I, in my inmost being, will enjoy and know,
 Seize with my soul the highest and most deep;
 Men's weal and woe upon my bosom heap;
 And thus this self of mine to all their selves expanded,
 Like them I too at last be stranded. 1775
- Mephistopheles.* Oh, trust me who for many a thousand year
 Have chewed this crust, it is so hard at best
 That twixt the cradle and the bier
 That ancient leaven no man can digest.
 Trust one like me: this Whole is wrought 1780
 And fashioned only for a God's delight!
 He dwells in an eternal light;
 Us into darkness He has brought; .
 To you are suited only day and night.
- Faust.* Ah, but I will!
- Mephistopheles.* Well said and right! 1785
 And yet I fear there is but one thing wrong;
 For life is short and art is long.
 I'd think you'd let yourself be taught.
 Associate you with a poet; then, in thought,
 You leave the gentleman full sweep, 1790
 Upon your honoured head to heap

Each good and noble quality:

The lion's mood,

The stag's rapidity,

The fiery blood of Italy,

The Northman's hardihood.

1795

The secret for it? Let him find

How magnanimity and cunning are combined,

How with a youth's hot impulse you may fall

In love according to a plan.

1800

Might I myself know such a gentleman,

Him Mr. Microcosm I would call.

Faust. What am I if I strive in vain

To win the crown of all mankind which, though afar,

All senses struggle to obtain?

1805

Mephistopheles. You at the end are—what you are.

Put on your head perukes with a million locks,

Put on your feet a pair of ell-high socks,

You after all will still be—what you are.

Faust. I feel that I have made each treasure

1810

Of human mind my own in vain,

And when at last I sit me down at leisure,

No new-born power wells up within my brain.

I'm not a hair's-breadth more in height

Nor nearer to the Infinite.

1815

Mephistopheles. My good sir, you observe this matter

As men these matters always see;

But we must manage that much better

Before life's pleasures from us flee.

Your hands and feet too—what the devil!—

1820

Your head and seed are yours alone!

Yet all with which I gaily revel,

Is it on that account the less my own?

If for six stallions I can pay,

Aren't all their powers added to my store?

1825

I am a proper man and dash away

As if the legs I had were twenty-four!

Quick, then! Let all reflection be,

And straight into the world with me!

A chap who speculates—let this be said—

1830

Is very like a beast on moorland dry,

That by some evil spirit round and round is led,

While fair, green pastures round about him lie.

Faust. But how shall we begin?

Mephistopheles. We'll just get out, so come!

Bah! what a place of martyrdom!

1835

What kind of life is this you lead?

Boring the youngsters and yourself indeed!

Leave that to Master Paunch, your neighbour!

Why plague yourself by threshing straws?
 The best that you can know with all your labour, 1840
 You dare not tell the striplings raw.
 Right now I hear one in the passageway.

Faust. I cannot possibly see him today.

Mephistopheles. He's waited long, the poor young chap;
 Uncomforted, he must not go away. 1845
 Come, let me have your gown and cap;
 I in that costume? What a precious fit!
He dresses himself up.

Now you can leave things to my wit!
 I only need a quarter of an hour.
 And then our lovely tour, meanwhile prepare for it! 1850

Exit FAUST

Mephistopheles [*in FAUST's long robe*].

Humanity's most lofty power,
 Reason and knowledge, pray despise!
 Let but the Spirit of all Lies
 With works of dazzling magic blind you;
 Then, absolutely mine, I'll have and bind you! 1855
 To him has Fate a spirit given
 That, uncurbed, ever onward sweeps,
 Whose striving, by too hasty impulse driven,
 The joys of this earth overleaps.
 Him will I drag through wild life whirling past, 1860
 Through all that is unmeaning, shallow stuff;
 I'll see him struggle, weaken, and stick fast!
 Before his greedy lips that can not feast enough
 Shall hover food and drink as if for some grand revel;
 Refreshment will he all in vain implore; 1865
 And had he not surrendered to the Devil,
 Still were he lost forevermore.

A STUDENT enters

Student. I've been here just a little while or so
 And come to pay an humble call,
 To talk with you, a man to know, 1870
 One who is named with reverence by all

Mephistopheles. You please me greatly by your courtesyl
 A man like many another one you see.

Have you already looked about elsewhere?

Student. I beg you, take me in your kindly care! 1875
 I come with every good intention,
 Fresh blood, and money, though not much to mention.
 My mother scarcely would permit my going.

I'd fain learn here abroad something worth knowing.

Mephistopheles. Well, now you're at the proper place. 1880

Student. Yet, frankly, would I could my steps retrace!
 Within these walls the lecture hall,

I do not like it here at all.

It is a space that's so confined;

One sees no green nor any tree,

And in the halls with benches lined,

Sight, hearing, thought, all go from me.

Mephistopheles. That only comes with habit, so

A child takes not its mother's breast

Quite willingly in the beginning, though

Soon nourishes itself with zest.

So at the breasts of Wisdom nursed,

Each day you'll lust for them the more athirst.

Student. I'll cling about her neck with joy,

But say what means thereto I shall employ.

Mephistopheles. Ere you go on, explain your views.

Which is the faculty you choose?

Student. I'd like right learnèd to become; what is

On earth I'd gladly comprehend,

To heaven itself my range extend,

Know all of nature and the sciences.

Mephistopheles. Then you are on the proper way

But must not let yourself be lured astray.

Student. Body and soul I'm for it bent;

Yet there would please me, I must say,

A little freedom and divertisement

Upon a pleasant summer holiday.

Mephistopheles. Make use of time, its course so soon is run,

Yet system teaches you how time is won.

I counsel you, dear friend, in sum,

That first you take *collegium logicum*.

Your spirit's then well broken in for you,

In Spanish boots¹ laced tightly to,

That you henceforth may more deliberately keep

The path of thought and straight along it creep,

And not perchance criss-cross may go,

A-will-o'-wisping to and fro.

Then you'll be taught full many a day

What at one stroke you've done alway,

Like eating and like drinking free,

It now must go like: One! Two! Three!

In fact, when men are fabricating thought,

It goes as when a weaver's masterpiece is wrought.

One treadle sets a thousand threads a-going,

And to and fro the shuttle flies;

Quite unperceived the threads are flowing,

One stroke effects a thousand ties.

Then some philosopher steps in, and he

¹Instruments of torture favoured by the Spanish Inquisition, consisting of long iron gaiters screwed tighter and tighter around the legs.

- Will demonstrate to you it so must be:
 The first was so, the second so, 1930
 And thus the third and fourth are so;
 And if no first nor second had been there,
 The third and fourth one would be never.
 All students prize that everywhere,
 But are they weavers? No, they're not that clever. 1935
 Who'll know aught living and describe it well,
 Seeks first the spirit to expel.
 He then has the component parts in hand
 But lacks, alas! the spirit's band.
Encheirisis naturae,¹ Chemistry names it so, 1940
 Mocking herself but all unwitting though.
- Student.* I can't quite understand you, I confess.
- Mephistopheles.* Next time, be sure, you will have more success,
 When you have learned how to reduce
 And classify all by its use. 1945
- Student.* I feel as stupid after all you've said
 As if a miller's wheel were whirling in my head.
- Mephistopheles.* And next—the first of all worth mention—
 To Metaphysics you must give attention,
 And see that you profoundly strive to gain 1950
 What is not suited for the human brain.
 For what goes in or won't go in the head,
 A brilliant phrase will serve you in good stead.
 Yet, first of all for this half-year,
 Observe the best of systems here 1955
 You take five lectures daily—understand?
 And when the clock strikes, be on hand!
 Be well prepared before the start,
 With paragraphs well got by heart,
 So later you can better look 1960
 And see he says naught save what's in the book;
 But write away as unabated
 As if the Holy Ghost dictated!
- Student.* You will not need to say that to me twice!
 I can foresee how much I'll gain from this advice; 1965
 Because what one has down in black and white
 It is a comfort to take home at night.
- Mephistopheles.* But come now, choose a faculty!
- Student.* I can't adjust myself to Law—not possibly.
- Mephistopheles.* I can't blame that in you, it's no demerit. 1970
 This science as it really is I see.
 Statutes and laws that we inherit
 Like an eternal malady
 Go trailing on from race to race
 And furtive shift from place to place. 1975
- ¹Manipulation of nature.

To nonsense reason turns, and benefit to worry.
 Woe unto you that you're a grandchild, woe!
 For of the law that was born with us, no!
 Of that, alas! there never is a query.

Student. You have increased my own disgust. The youth
 Whom you instruct is blessed in sooth!
 I'm now almost inclined to try Theology. 1980

Mephistopheles. I would not wish to lead you so astray.
 In what this science teaches, it would be
 So hard to shun the false, misleading way; 1985
 So much of hidden poison lies therein,
 You scarce can tell it from its medicine.
 'Tis best here too that only one be heard
 And that you swear then by the master's word.
 Upon the whole—to words stick fast! 1990
 Then through a sure gate you'll at last
 Enter the templed hall of Certainty.

Student. Yet in each word some concept there must be.

Mephistopheles. Quite true! But don't torment yourself too
 anxiously;
 For at the point where concepts fail, 1995
 At the right time a word is thrust in there.
 With words we fitly can our foes assail,
 With words a system we prepare,
 Words we quite fitly can believe,
 Nor from a word a mere iota thief. 2000

Student. Pardon, I keep you here with many a question,
 But I must cause more trouble still.
 Concerning Medicine as well you will
 Not make some pithy, keen suggestion?
 Three years! how quickly they are past! 2005
 And, God! the field is far too vast.
 If but some sign is indicated,
 A man can sooner feel his way.

Mephistopheles [aside]. With this dry tone I am now satiated;
 The downright devil I must once more play. 2010

Aloud.

Medicine's spirit one can grasp with ease.
 The great and little world you study through,
 To let things finally their course pursue
 As God may please.
 It's vain that you in search of knowledge roam and drift, 2015
 Each only learns what learn he can;
 Yet he who grasps the moment's gift,
 He is your proper man.
 You are moreover quite well-built, beside,
 Will never lack for boldness too; 2020
 And if you only in yourself confide,

All other souls confide in you.

Learn chiefly how to lead the women; be assured

That all their "Ohs" and "Ahs," eternal, old,

So thousandfold,

2025

Can at a single point be cured;

And if you half-way decorously come,

You have them all beneath your thumb.

A title first must make them comprehend

That your art many arts doth far transcend.

2030

By way of welcome then you touch all matters

For sake of which, long years, another flatters.

Learn how the little pulse to squeeze

And then with sly and fiery glances seize

Her freely round the slender hips to see

2035

How firmly laced up she may be.

Student. Now that looks better! Now one sees the where and how!

Mephistopheles. Dear friend, all theory is grey,

And green the golden tree of life.

Student.

I vow,

It's all just like a dream to me.

2040

Another time I'll bore you, if I may,

To hear your wisdom through and through.

Mephistopheles. All that I can I'll gladly do.

Student. It is impossible for me to go away

Before I hand my album here to you.

2045

Will your grace grant this favour to me too?

Mephistopheles. Oh, very well!

He writes and gives it back.

Student [reads]. ERITIS SICUT DEUS, SCIENTES BONUM ET MALUM.¹

He closes the book reverently and takes his leave.

Mephistopheles. Follow the ancient text and heed my coz the snake;

With all your likeness to God you'll sometimes tremble and quake. 2050

FAUST enters.

Faust. Now whither shall we go?

Mephistopheles. Whither it pleases you.

We'll see the little world and then we'll see the great.

With how much joy and how much profit too

You'll sponge the whole course through until you graduate.

Faust. But with my beard so long I may

2055

Quite lack life's free and easy way.

In this attempt no luck will come to me;

I never fitted in society at all.

With other men I feel myself so small;

I'll feel embarrassed constantly.

2060

Mephistopheles. For that, good friend, this is the remedy I give:

Just trust yourself, then you'll know how to live.

¹"Ye shall be as God, know good and evil." Cf. Genesis, 3. 5.

THE FIRST PART

49

Faust. We'll leave the house but how shall we set out?

Have you a horse, a servant, carriage, anywhere?

Mephistopheles. We'll only spread this mantle out

2065

And have it bear us through the air.

You'll take upon this daring flight

No heavy luggage, only light.

A bit of fiery air—I'll have it ready here—

Will lift us from this earth without ado,

2070

And if we're light, we'll go up swiftly too.

I must congratulate you on your new career.

AUERBACH'S CELLAR IN LEIPSIK

DRINKING-BOUT OF JOLLY COMPANIONS

Frosch. Will no one drink? and no one laugh?

I'll teach you how to look so wry!

You're everyone like sodden chaff

2075

And always used to blaze sky-high!

Brander. That's your fault; you don't add a single stroke,

No beastliness and not one silly joke.

Frosch [*pours a glass of wine over BRANDER'S HEAD*].

There you have both!

Brander. You twofold beast!

Frosch. That's what you asked me for, at least!

2080

Siebel. If any quarrel, throw 'em out!

Come, sing with all your lungs, boys, swill and shout!

Up! Holla! Ho!

Altmayer. My God! I'm done for! Here!

Some cotton wool! The fellow bursts my ear.

Siebel. When vaulted ceilings echo back our song,

2085

Then first we feel the bass is deep and strong.

Frosch. Quite right! Then out with him who takes a thing amiss!

Ah! tara lara da!

Altmayer. Ah! tara lara da!

Frosch. The throats are tuned for this!

He sings.

Dear Holy Roman Empire! Say,

2090

How does it stick together?

Brander. A nasty song! Shame! a political song!

A wretched song! Thank God each morning, brother,

That for the Roman Empire you don't need to bother!

There is at least one gain I am most thankful for,

2095

That I'm not Kaiser and not Chancellor.

And yet we must not fail to have a ruler. Stay!

Let us elect a Pope! What do you say?

You know the kind of quality that can

Bear down the scale and elevate the man.

2100

Frosch [sings].

Soar aloft, Dame Nightingale,
Ten thousand times my sweetheart hail!

Siebel. No greeting to a sweetheart! I'll not hear of this!

Frosch. You will not hinder me! My sweetheart, hail! A kiss!

He sings.

Lift the latch! In silent night. 2105
Lift the latch! The lover wakes.
Drop the latch! The morning breaks.

Siebel. Yes, sing on, praise and brag of her with all your might!

I will in my own time be sure to laugh at you.

She once led me astray, she'll do it to you too. 2110

Give her a kobold for her lovesick yearning!

At some cross-road let him go woo her.

Let some old buck, from Blocksberg¹ homeward turning,

Still on the gallop, bleat "Good Evening!" to her.

A gallant fellow of real flesh and blood 2115

Is for that wench a deal too good.

I'll hear no greetings to that lass

But such as smash her window-glass.

Brander [pounding on the table].

Give heed! Give heed! Lend me your ear!

You, sirs, confess that I know what is what. 2120

Some lovesick folk are sitting here,

And so in honour due their present lot

I must contribute to their night's good cheer.

Give heed! A brand-new song 'twill be!

And sing the chorus lustily! 2125

He sings.

There once in a cellar lived a rat,

Had a paunch could scarce be smother,

For it lived on butter and on fat,

A mate for Doctor Luther.

But soon the cook did poison strew 2130

And then the rat, so cramped it grew

As if it had love in its body.

Chorus [shouting].

As if it had love in its body.

Brander.

It flew around, and out it flew,

From every puddle swilling, 2135

It gnawed and scratched the whole house
through,

But its rage was past all stilling.

It jumped full oft in anguish mad,

¹Usually called the Brocken, the legendary meeting-place of witches.

THE FIRST PART

51

But soon, poor beast, enough it had,
As if it had love in its body.

2140

Chorus.

As if it had love in its body.

Brander.

By anguish driven in open day
It rushed into the kitchen,
Fell on the hearth and panting lay,
Most pitiably twitchin'.
Then laughed the poisoner: "Heel heel heel
It's at its last gasp now," said she,
"As if it had love in its body."

2145

Chorus.

"As if it had love in its body."

Siebel. How these dull chaps enjoy themselves! Now that's
A fine old art, so it would seem,
To scatter poison for poor rats!

2150

Brander. They stand so high in your esteem?

Altmayer. See the old tub, so bald and fat!

Misfortune makes him mild and tame;

2155

He sees in any bloated rat

His very own image, quite the same.

FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES enter.

Mephistopheles. Before all else I now must let you view

The doings of a jovial crew,

That you may see how smoothly life can flow along.

2160

To this crowd every day's a feast and song.

With little wit and much content,

Each, on his own small round intent,

Is like a kitten with its tail.

While no sick headache they bewail

2165

And while their host will still more credit give,

Joyous and free from care they live.

Brander. Those people come directly from a tour,

You see it in their strange, odd ways;

They've not been here an hour, I'm sure.

2170

Frosch. In truth, you're right! My Leipsic will I praise!

A little Paris, one that cultivates its people.

Siebel. Who are these strangers, do you think?

Frosch. Leave it to me! Give me a brimming drink

And from these chaps I'll worm the truth

2175

As one draws out a young child's tooth.

To me they seem of noble family,

So proud and discontented they appear to be.

Brander. They're mountebanks, I'll lay a bet with you!

Altmayer. Perhaps!

Frosch. Pay heed, I'll make them feel the screw!

2180

Mephistopheles [to FAUST]. These chaps don't scent the Devil out
And would not if he had them by the snout!

Faust. We greet you, sirs!

Siebel. Thanks and to you the same!

In a low tone, looking at MEPHISTOPHELES askance.

Why is that fellow's one foot lame?

Mephistopheles. We'll sit with you if you'll permit the liberty. 2185

Instead of some good drink which is not here,

We shall enjoy your company's good cheer.

Altmayer. A very pampered man you seem to be.

Frosch. I guess you started late from Rippach on your way.

Can you have supped with Master Hans¹ tonight? 2190

Mephistopheles. We passed him by without a stop today!

We spoke with him last time. He'd quite

A lot about his cousins to convey,

Charged us with greetings to each one.

He bows toward FROSCH.

Altmayer [in a low tone]. You got it then! He knows!

Siebel. A cunning

fellow, he!

2195

Frosch. Just wait a bit, I'll get him on the run.

Mephistopheles. If I mistake not, didn't we

Hear practised voices sing in chorus?

In truth, a song must perfectly

Reëcho from this vaulted ceiling o'er us! 2200

Frosch. Are you perchance a virtuoso?

Mephistopheles. Oh no! The zest is great, ability but so-so.

Altmayer. Give us a song!

Mephistopheles. A lot, if that way you incline.

Siebel. But let it be a brand-new strain!

Mephistopheles. We have returned quite recently from Spain, 2205

The lovely land of melody and wine.

He sings.

A king there once was reigning,
Who cherished a great big flea—

Frosch. Hear that! A flea! Did you quite grasp the jest?

I say, a flea's a tidy guest.

2210

Mephistopheles [sings]. :

A king there once was reigning,
Who cherished a great big flea;
No little love attaining,
As his own son loved he.
He called his tailor hireling,

2215

¹Hans Arsch of Rippach, a stock name for a simple-minded, boorish person. Rippach is a village a few miles southwest of Leipsic.

The tailor to him flew:
 "Ho, measure now the squireling
 For coat and breeches too."

Brander. Be sure to tell that man of stitches
 That he must measure to a hair, 2220
 And if his head is dear to him, I swear,
 No wrinkles must be in those breeches!
Mephistopheles.

In silk and velvet splendid
 He now was always dressed,
 By ribbons gay attended, 2225
 A cross upon his breast.
 Was minister created,
 A mighty star did sport;
 Then all his kin, elated,
 Became great lords at court. 2230

Lord, lady, and dependant
 Were plagued and sore distressed;
 The queen and her attendant
 Were bitten by the pest.
 And yet they dared not whack them 2235
 Nor scratch by day or night.
 We smother and we crack them
 Whenever we feel them bite.

Chorus [shouting].
 We smother and we crack them
 Whenever we feel them bite. 2240

Frosch. Bravo! Bravo! That was splendid!

Siebel. And so should every flea be ended!

Brander. Point your fingers and squeeze them fine!

Altmayer. Long live freedom! Long live wine!

Mephistopheles. A glass to honour freedom I would gladly clink 2245
 If but your wines were better fit to drink.

Siebel. We do not want to hear such talk again!

Mephistopheles. I only fear the landlord might complain;
 Else I would treat each worthy guest
 With what our cellar offers of the best. 2250

Siebel. Do bring it on! The risk be mine.

Frosch. Produce a good glass and we'll praise your wine.

But don't give us a sample all too small;

If I'm to play the solemn judge at all,

A right good mouthful I require. 2255

Altmayer [in a low tone]. They're from the Rhine, I scented that
 before.

Mephistopheles. Fetch me a gimlet!

Brander.

Say, why that desire?

You haven't got the casks outside the door?

Altmayer. Back there the landlord keeps his tool-kit placed.

Mephistopheles [*taking the gimlet, to FROSCH*].

Now say, what do you want to taste?

2260

Frosch. What do you mean? Have you so many kinds?

Mephistopheles. I leave the choice to each. Make up your minds!

Altmayer [*to FROSCH*].

You're licking your chops now! Be careful, steady!

Frosch. 'Tis well! If I'm to choose, it's Rhine wine I propose.

The best of gifts is what the fatherland bestows.

2265

Mephistopheles [*boring a hole in the edge of the table at the place where FROSCH is sitting*]. Get us some wax at once, to have the stoppers ready!

Altmayer. Ah! These are tricks! It's jugglery!

Mephistopheles [*to BRANDER*]. And you?

Brander. Champagne's the stuff for me,

And bubbling, sparkling, must it be.

MEPHISTOPHELES is boring holes; one of the others has meanwhile made the stoppers and plugged the holes.

Brander. What's foreign we can't always shun,

2270

So far from us must good things often be.

A genuine German can't abide the French, not one,

But of their wines he drinks most cheerfully.

Siebel [*as MEPHISTOPHELES comes near his place*].

I do not like the sour, I'd have you know;

Give me a glass that's really sweet!

2275

Mephistopheles [*boring*]. You'll see, at once Tokay will flow.

Altmayer. No, gentlemen, just look me in the face! I see't,

You're only fooling us, it is a jest.

Mephistopheles. Oh! Oh! With such a noble guest

That were a bit too much to dare!

2280

Be quick about it and declare!

What kind of wine then shall I serve?

Altmayer. Oh, any! Don't keep asking! I don't care!

After all the holes are bored and plugged.

Mephistopheles [*with strange gestures*].

Clustered grapes the vine bears!

And horns the he-goat wears!

2285

The wine is juicy, wood the vine;

The wooden table too can give forth wine.

A view of nature, deep and clear!

Only believe! A miracle's here!

Now draw the stoppers and enjoy your fill!

2290

All [*while they pull out the stoppers and the wine desired runs into each one's glass*]. O beauteous fountain flowing at our will!

Mephistopheles. But watch, I say, that not a drop you spill!

They drink repeatedly.

All [sing].

We're just as happy as cannibals,
As if we were five hundred swine!

Mephistopheles. Behold how happy is this folk—it's free!

2295

Faust. I think now I would like to go away.

Mephistopheles. But first give heed to a display

Of glorious bestiality.

Siebel [*drinks carelessly; the wine is spilt upon the ground and turns into flame*]. Help! Hell's on fire! It's burning me!

Mephistopheles [*conjuring the flame*]. Be quiet, friendly element! 2300
To the young men.

This time 'twas but a flame that Purgatory sent.

Siebel. What's that? Just wait! For that you will pay dear.

You don't know who we are, that's clear.

Frosch. Don't try that game a second time, I say!

Altmayer. I think we'd better bid him gently go away.

2305

Siebel. What, sir! You venture to provoke us

And carry on your hocus-pocus?

Mephistopheles. Silence, old wine-butt!

Siebel.

Broomstick, you!

Will you insult me to my nose?

Brander. Just wait a bit, 'twill soon be raining blows!

2310

Altmayer [*draws a stopper out of the table; fire leaps out at him*].

I burn! I burn!

Siebel. It's sorcery!

The rogue's an outlaw! Come, thrust home with me!

They draw their knives and rush at MEPHISTOPHELES.

Mephistopheles [*with solemn gestures*].

False form and word appear,

Change place and sense's sphere!

Be there and here!

2315

They stand amazed and look at each other.

Altmayer. Where am I? What a lovely land!

Frosch. Vineyards! Do I see right?

Siebel.

Grape clusters close at hand!

Brander. Here underneath this foliage green,

See, what a bunch! What grapes are to be seen!

He seizes SIEBEL by the nose. The others do the same, one to the other, and raise their knives.

Mephistopheles [*as before*]. Error, loose from their eyes the band! 2320

And mark you how the Devil's jesting goes.

He vanishes with FAUST. The fellows start back from one another.

Siebel. What's up?

Altmayer.

How's this?

Frosch.

Was that your nose?

Brander [to *SIEBEL*]. And yours I'm holding in my hand!

Altmayer. That was a blow, it staggered me down to my toes!

I can't stand up, get me a chair!

2325

Frosch. Out with it, say, what's happened?

Siebel.

Where,

Oh, where's that rascal? If I find him now,

He shan't escape alive, I vow.

Altmayer. With my own eyes I saw him riding through

The cellar-door—upon a wine-cask too!

2330

I feel a weight like lead about my feet!

Turning toward the table.

My God! I wonder if the wines still flow?

Siebel. It was a swindle, lies, 'twas all a cheat.

Frosch. Yet I drank wine or thought it so.

Brander. But how about the grapes? What was that anyway?

2335

Altmayer. One should believe no miracles? Oh, say!

WITCH'S KITCHEN

A great cauldron stands over the fire on a low hearth. In the steam which rises from it, various figures become visible. A Female Ape sits by the cauldron and skims the foam off it, taking care that it does not run over. The Male Ape, with the Young Apes, sits beside it and warms himself. Walls and ceiling are decked out with the strangest articles of witches' furniture.

FAUST. MEPHISTOPHELES.

Faust. I am repelled by this mad sorcery.

I shall get well, you promise me,

In this chaotic craziness?

Shall I demand an old crone's remedy?

2340

And will the dirty, boiling mess

Divest my body of some thirty years?

Woe's me, if there's naught better you can find!

For now my hope already disappears.

Has nature not, has not a noble mind,

2345

Discovered somewhere any balm?

Mephistopheles. My friend, you talk once more as if you're calm.

By natural means you can acquire a youthful look,

But it is in another book

And is a chapter strange to see.

2350

Faust. Still I will know it.

Mephistopheles. Good! To have a remedy

Without physician, money, sorcery:

Betake yourself into the fields without delay,

Begin to dig and hack away,

Maintain yourself, your thought and feeling,

2355

Within a circle quite confined and fixed;

Take nourishment of food that is not mixed;
 Live with the beasts as beast, nor deem it base
 To spread the field you reap with your own dung.
 Be sure, this method's best in any case,
 Though eighty years of age, still to be young.

2360

Faust. I am not used to that; I can't submit
 To take the spade in hand and dig and ditch.
 For me a narrow life is quite unfit.

Mephistopheles. So then there is no help save from the witch.

2365

Faust. But why the old beldame? What is your notion?
 Can you yourself not brew the potion?

Mephistopheles. That were a lovely pastime on my part!
 Meanwhile a thousand bridges I could rear.

We can't depend alone on science or on art,
 The work demands a deal of patience too.

2370

A quiet spirit's busy many a year,
 For time alone produces potent brew.

And all that is a part of it
 Is wondrous as one must admit!

2375

It's true, the Devil taught her how to do it,
 And yet the Devil can not brew it.

Catching sight of THE BEASTS.

How delicate the breed! Just see!
 That is the maid! The man is he!

TO THE BEASTS.

It seems the dame is not at home with you.

2380

The Beasts.

To a rollicking crew
 Out she flew
 By the chimney-flue!

Mephistopheles. How long is it her wont to roam from here?

The Beasts. As long as it takes to warm a paw.

2385

Mephistopheles [*to FAUST*]. How do you think the dainty beasts
 appear?

Faust. Absurd as anyone I ever saw.

Mephistopheles. I say, this kind of conversation
 I carry on with greatest delectation.

TO THE BEASTS.

Accursèd puppets! Come and tell,

2390

What are you querling in that stuff?

The Beasts. A beggars' soup that's watered well.

Mephistopheles. Then you've a public large enough.

The Male Ape [*sides up to MEPHISTOPHELES and fawns on him*].

Oh, do throw the dice,
 Make me rich in a trice,
 And do let it win me!
 It all is so bad,

2395

If money I had,
Good sense would be in me.

Mephistopheles. How fortunate the ape would think himself, could he 2400

But also risk some money in a lottery!

*Meanwhile THE YOUNG APES have been playing with a great globe
which they now roll forward.*

The Male Ape.

That is the world!
It mounts, now whirled,
Its fall will follow,
Like glass it rings. 2405
Soon break such things!
Within it's hollow.
Here bright it gleams,
Here brighter beams.
I am alive! 2410
My dear son, strive
To keep away!
For you must die!
'Tis made of clay,
In bits 'twill fly. 2415

Mephistopheles.

What means the sieve?

The Male Ape [takes it down].

Came you to thief,
I would know you directly.

He runs to THE FEMALE APE and makes her look through it.

Look through the sieve!
Know you the thief? 2420
Dare not name him exactly?

Mephistopheles [going nearer to the fire].
And then this pot?

Male Ape and Female Ape.

The half-witted sot!
He knows not the pot,
He knows not the kettle! 2425

Mephistopheles.

Unmannerly beast!

The Male Ape.

Take the brush at least
And sit on the settle!

He makes MEPHISTOPHELES sit down.

Faust [who all this time has been standing before a mirror, now going near it, now going away from it].

What do I see? What form divinely fair
Within this magic mirror is revealed? 2430

Oh lend me, Love, thy swiftest wing and bear
Me hence into her wondrous field!

Alas! If from this spot I dare

But stir, or if I venture to go near,
Then dim as through a mist doth she appear! 2435

The fairest image of a woman! Can it be,

Is it possible? Can woman be so fair?

Must I in that recumbent body there
Behold of all the heavens the epitome?

Can one so fair be found on earth? 2440

Mephistopheles. Well, if a God for six whole days, my friend,

Toils hard and says "Ah, bravo!" at the end,¹

Then something rather neat must come to birth.

For this time gaze till you are satiate.

I know how I can find you such a treasure 2445

And he who as a bridegroom has the happy fate

To lead her home, is blessed beyond all measure!

FAUST continues to look in the mirror. MEPHISTOPHELES, stretching himself on the settle and playing with the brush, continues to speak.

I sit here like a king upon his throne;

I hold the sceptre here, I lack the crown alone.

The Beasts [who meanwhile have been playing all sorts of odd confused antics, bring a crown to MEPHISTOPHELES with a loud outcry].

Oh, please be so good 2450

With sweat and with blood

The crown to belime!

They handle the crown awkwardly and shatter it into two pieces with which they jump about.

It's done for! and we,

We speak and we see,

We hear and we rhyme. 2455

Faust [facing the mirror]. Woe's me! How nearly crazy do I feel!

Mephistopheles [pointing to THE BEASTS].

Now my head too almost begins to reel.

The Beasts.

And if we succeed

And all fits indeed,

Will thoughts in it be! 2460

Faust [as above]. My breast begins to burn in me!

Let's go away immediately!

¹Cf. Genesis 1. 31.

Mephistopheles [in the same attitude as above].

Well, now at least one has to say,

There are some honest poets anyway.

The cauldron which THE FEMALE APE has neglected, begins to boil over; a great flame arises which streams up the chimney.

THE WITCH comes careering down through the flame with horrible cries.

The Witch.

Owl Owl! Owl! Owl!

2465

You damnèd beast! Accursèd sow!

Neglecting kettle, scorching me now!

Accursèd beast!

Espying FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES.

What is that here?

Who are you here?

2470

What will you wreak?

Who is the sneak?

May pangs of hell

Burn your bones well!

She plunges the skimming-ladle into the cauldron and sprinkles flames toward FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES, and THE BEASTS. THE BEASTS whimper.

Mephistopheles [who reverses the brush which he has been holding and strikes among the glasses and pots].

In two! In two!

2475

There lies the brew!

There lies the glass!

Let the joke pass:

As beat, you ass,

To melodies from you!

2480

As THE WITCH steps back full of rage and horror.

Do you know me? You skeleton! You fright!

Do you know me, your lord and master?

What holds me back that I don't smite

And crush you and your ape-sprites with disaster?

Have you no more respect before the doublet red?

2485

Can you not recognize the tall cock's-feather?

Was this my face hid altogether?

My name forsooth I should have said?

The Witch. My rough salute, sir, pardon me!

But yet no horse's-foot I see.

2490

Your pair of ravens, where are they?

Mephistopheles. This time I'll pardon you that you were rough,

For it's a long time, sure enough,

Since we have crossed each other's way.

Culture that licks and prinks the world anew,

2495

Has reached out to the Devil too.

The northern phantom now is seen nowhere;
Where do you see the horns, the claws, and tail?
And as concerns the foot which I can't spare,

My credit socially it would impair;

2500

So I, as many young men do, avail

Myself of false calves now for many a year.

The Witch [*dancing*]. I almost lose my senses and my brain—oh, dear!

To see Squire Satan once more here!

Mephistopheles. That title, woman, I forbid it me!

2505

The Witch. Why? Has it done you any injury?

Mephistopheles. That's been known as a fable many a season;

But men have things no better for that reason.

Free are they from the Evil One; the evil are still here.

Just call me Baron, that will satisfy me.

2510

Like other cavaliers I am a cavalier.

My noble blood you don't deny me;

This is the coat of arms I bear, see here!

He makes an indecent gesture.

The Witch [*laughs immoderately*].

Hal Ha! That is your very way!

Just as you ever were, you are a rogue today!

2515

Mephistopheles [*to FAUST*]. My friend, learn well and understand,

This is the way to take a witch in hand.

The Witch. Now, gentlemen, what say you I shall do?

Mephistopheles. A good glass of the well-known juice,

Yet I must beg the oldest sort of you.

2520

A double strength do years produce.

The Witch. With pleasure! Here I have a bottle

From which I sometimes wet my throttle,

Which has no more the slightest stink;

I'll gladly give a little glass to you.

2525

In a low tone.

And yet this man, if unprepared he drink,

He can not live an hour, as you know too.

Mephistopheles. He is a friend of mine whom it will profit well;

I would bestow your kitchen's best on him.

So draw your circle, speak your spell,

2530

Give him a cup full to the brim!

THE WITCH with curious gestures draws a circle and places marvellous things in it; meanwhile the glasses begin to ring, the cauldron to sound and make music. Lastly, she brings a large book and places the APES in a circle so as to make them serve as a reading-desk and hold the torch. She beckons FAUST to come near her.

Faust [*to MEPHISTOPHELES*]. What is to come of all this? Say!

These frantic gestures and this crazy stuff?

This most insipid, fooling play,
I've known and hated it enough.

2535

Mephistopheles. Nonsense! She only wants to joke us;
I beg you, do not be so stern a man!
Physician-like, she has to play some hocus-pocus
So that the juice will do you all the good it can.

He obliges FAUST to step into the circle.

The Witch [begins to declaim, with great emphasis, from the book].

This you must ken!

2540

From one make ten,

And two let be,

Make even three,

Then rich you'll be.

Skip o'er the four!

2545

From five and six,

The Witch's tricks,

Make seven and eight,

'Tis finished straight;

And nine is one,

2550

And ten is none,

That is the witch's one-time-one!

Faust. I think the old hag's talking in delirium.

Mephistopheles. Much more of it is still to come.

I know it well, thus doth the whole book chime;

2555

I've squandered over it much time,

For perfect contradictions, in the end,

Remain mysterious alike for fools and sages.

The art is old and new, my friend.

It was the way in all the ages,

2560

Through 'Three and One, and One and 'Three,

Error instead of truth to scatter.

Thus do men prate and teach untroubledly.

With fools who'll bandy wordy chatter?

Men oft believe, if only they hear wordy pother,

2565

That there must surely be in it some thought or other.

The Witch [goes on].

The lofty power

Of Wisdom's dower

From all the world is hidden!

Who takes no thought,

2570

To him it's brought,

Without a care, unbidden.

Faust. What nonsense is she chanting here before us?

My head's near splitting from her shrieking.

I seem to hear a whole, great chorus,

2575

A hundred thousand idiots speaking.

Mephistopheles. Enough, O Sibyl excellent, enough!

Give us your drink, the precious stuff,

And fill the goblet quickly to the brim.

Since he's my friend, the drink will not hurt him.

2580

A man of numerous degrees, he's quaffed

Already many a goodly draught.

THE WITCH with many ceremonies pours the drink into a goblet.

As FAUST lifts it to his mouth, a light flame rises.

Mephistopheles. Quick, down with it! And make an end!

Your heart will be delighted by the drink.

You are the Devil's bosom friend,

2585

And yet, afraid of fire, you shrink?

THE WITCH breaks up the circle. FAUST steps out.

Mephistopheles. Quick, now, away! You must not rest.

The Witch. May you enjoy the small gulp's savour!

Mephistopheles [to *THE WITCH*]. If I can do you any favour,

Then on Walpurgis Night make your request.

2590

The Witch. Here is a song! If sometimes sung, you'll see

In what a special way it will affect you.

Mephistopheles [to *FAUST*]. Come quickly and let me direct you;

You must perspire—that needs must be—

So that the potent juice all through you flow.

2595

I'll teach you afterward to value noble leisure,

And soon you'll feel with thrilling pleasure

How Cupid stirs and leaps and trips it to and fro.

Faust. Let me but briefly gaze once more into the glass,

Ah, too fair seemed that woman's form!

2600

Mephistopheles. No, no! A model that no woman can surpass,

You'll see anon alive and warm.

In a low tone.

With this drink in your body, soon you'll greet

A Helena in every girl you meet.

A STREET

FAUST. *MARGARET* [passing by].

Faust. My fair young lady, may I make so free

2605

As to lend you my arm and company?

Margaret. I'm not a lady, am not fair;

I can go home without your care.

She frees herself and exits.

Faust. By heaven, but this child is fair!

I've never seen her equal anywhere!

2610

So virtuous, modest, through and through,

Yet with a bit of curtness too.

Her ruby lips, her cheek's clear bloom,

I'll not forget till the day of doom!

And then how she casts down her eyes,
 Stamped deeply in my heart it lies! 2615
 How curt and short were her replies,
 That fills me with sheer ecstasy!

MEPHISTOPHELES *appears*.

Faust. Hear, you must get that girl for me!

Mephistopheles. Well, which one, then?

Faust. She just went by. 2620

Mephistopheles. That one? She was just coming from her priest,

Absolved from every sin, down to the least.

Hard by the chair I stole quite nigh.

She's innocent in deed and thought

And went to confession all for naught. 2625

Over her I have no power.

Faust. She's over fourteen years old even so.

Mephistopheles. My word! You talk like gay Lothario

Who covets for himself each lovely flower

And fancies, puffed up, there's no honour, no, 2630

Nor favour that he may not cull;

But yet that is not always possible.

Faust. Sir Master Worshipful, I beg you, pause

And leave me in peace with all your laws!

And this I say—few words are best— 2635

Unless that sweet young maiden lays

Her head this night upon my breast,

At midnight we've gone different ways.

Mephistopheles. Consider well what can and can not be.

I'll need at least some fourteen days 2640

But to scent out an opportunity.

Faust. Had I but seven hours' rest, no need

Of devil would I have, to lead

A little creature such as this astray.

Mephistopheles. You're talking almost like a Frenchman. Pray 2645

Don't let yourself be vexed beyond due measure.

What good is it to reap immediate pleasure?

The joy's not near so great, I say,

As if you first prepare the ground

With every sort of idle folly, 2650

Knead and make ready your pretty dolly,

As many Romance tales expound.

Faust. I've appetite without that too.

Mephistopheles. Now jests aside, no more ado.

With that good, lovely child, indeed, 2655

I tell you once for all, we can't use speed.

There's nothing here to take by storm;

To strategy we must conform.

Faust. Get something that the angel owns for me!

Oh, lead me to her place of rest! 2660

Get me a kerchief from her breast,

A garter to my ecstasy!

Mephistopheles. Now just to prove that I will be

Of helpful service in your agony,

We'll lose no moment in delay.

2665

I'll lead you to her room this very day.

Faust. And shall I see her? have her?

Mephistopheles. No!

For she'll be at a neighbour's for a chat or so.

While she is gone, all by yourself you may

Enjoy her atmosphere till you are sated

2670

And feast on all the hope of joys anticipated.

Faust. Can we go there?

Mephistopheles. It is too early yet.

Faust. Provide a gift for her and don't forget.

Exit.

Mephistopheles. Ah, gifts at once? That's good! He'll make a hit!

Full many a lovely place I know

2675

And many a treasure buried long ago.

I must survey the ground a bit.

Exit.

EVENING

A NEAT LITTLE ROOM

Margaret [*plaiting and binding up her braids of hair*].

I would give something, could I say

Who was that gentleman today!

Right gallant did he seem to be

2680

And of some noble family.

That from his brow I could have told—

Else he would not have been so bold.

Exit.

MEPHISTOPHELES and FAUST.

Mephistopheles. Come! come in! and on tiptoe!

Faust [*after a silence*]. Leave me alone here, I entreat!

2685

Mephistopheles [*peering about*].

Not every girl keeps things so neat.

Exit.

Faust [*looking up and around*]. Welcome, O thou sweet twilight glow

That through this shrine art stirring to and fro.

Sweet agony of love, possess this heart of mine,

Thou who on dews of hope dost live and yet dost pine.

2690

What sense of quiet breathes around,

Of order, of contentedness!

What riches in this poverty abound!

Within this prison, ah! what blessedness!

He throws himself on the leather arm-chair by the bed.

Oh, welcome me, thou who the world now gone 2695

Didst once receive in joy and sorrow, open-armed!

How often, ah! around this fathers'-throne

A flock of children clinging swarmed!

And, thankful for the Christmas gift, maybe

My darling here, her childish cheeks filled out, 2700

Kissed grandsire's withered hand devotedly.

I feel, O maid, thy spirit radiate

Abundance, order, round about,

That, motherly, instructs thee day by day,

Bids thee the cloth upon the table neatly lay, 2705

Even make the sand at thy feet decorate.

O darling hand! So godlike in thy ministry!

The hut becomes a realm of Heaven through thee.

And here!

He lifts one of the bed curtains.

What bliss and awe lay hold on me!

Here for whole hours I fain would tarry.

2710

O Nature! Here didst thou in visions airy

Mould her, an angel in nativity.

Here lay the child; with warm life heaving

The tender bosom filled and grew;

And here, with pure and holy weaving,

2715

The image of the gods was wrought anew!

And thou, O Faust, what led thee here? I feel

My very inmost being reel!

What wouldst thou here? What weights thy heart so sore?

O wretched Faust! I know thee now no more.

2720

Does magic play about me, sweet and rare?

Some force impelled me to enjoy without delay,

And now in dreams of love I seem to float away!

Are we the sport of every puff of air?

And if this very moment she might enter here,

2725

For thy rash conduct how wouldst thou atone!

Thou, great big lout, how small wouldst thou appear!

How, melted at her feet, thou wouldst lie prone!

Mephistopheles [enters]. Be quick! I see her coming down the lane.

Faust. Away! I'll never come back here again!

2730

Mephistopheles. Here is a casket, of some weight,

Which I got elsewhere as a bait.

Here, put it in the press, this minute;

She'll lose her senses, I swear it to you.

In fact, I put some trinkets in it,

2735

Enough another nobler maid to woo;

But still a child's a child, and play is play.

Faust. I don't know if I should?

Mephistopheles.

Why ask you, pray?

Do you perhaps intend to hoard the treasure?

Then I'd advise you in your lustfulness

2740

To waste no more sweet hours of leisure

And spare me further strain and stress.

I hope that you're not greedy!

I rub my hands, I scratch my head—

He puts the casket in the press and turns the lock again.

Away and speedy!—

2745

To turn the sweet young child that she be led

To satisfy your heart's desire and will;

And you look around

As if to a lecture you were bound,

As if before you, living still,

2750

Stood Physics and Metaphysics grey!

But off! away!

Exeunt.

Margaret [with a lamp]. Here is such close, such sultry air!

She opens the window.

And yet it's really not so warm out there.

I feel so strange—I don't know how—

2755

I wish that Mother came home now.

From head to foot I'm shuddering—

I'm but a foolish, fearsome thing!

She begins to sing while she undresses.

There was in Thule olden

A king true till the grave,

2760

To whom a beaker golden

His dying mistress gave.

Naught prized he more, this lover,

He drained it at each bout;

His eyes with tears brimmed over,

2765

As oft he drank it out.

And when he came to dying,

His towns and his lands he told,

Naught else his heir denying

Except the beaker of gold.

2770

Around him knight and vassal,

At a royal feast sat he

In his fathers' lofty castle,

The castle by the sea.

There the old pleasure-seeker

2775

Drank, standing, life's last glow,

Then hurled the sacred beaker

Into the waves below.

He saw it plunging, drinking,

And sinking in the sea,

2780

And so his eyes were sinking,
Never one drop more drank he.

She opens the press to put away her clothes and catches sight of the little jewel-casket.

How came this lovely casket in my press?
Indeed I turned the lock most certainly.
It's very strange! What's in it I can't guess. 2785
Someone has brought it as a pledge maybe,
And on it Mother loaned a bit.

Here on the ribbon hangs a little key,
I really think I'll open it.
What is that? God in Heaven! See! 2790
I've never seen such things as here!
Jewels! A noble lady might appear
With these on any holiday.

This chain—how would it look on me?
Ah, whose can all this splendour be? 2795

She adorns herself with it and steps before the mirror.

Were but the earrings mine! I say
One looks at once quite differently.
What good is beauty? blood of youth?
All that is nice and fine, in truth;
However, people pass and let it be. 2800
They praise you—half with pity, though, be sure.
Toward gold throng all,
To gold cling all,
Yes, all! Alas, we poor!

A PROMENADE

FAUST *walking thoughtfully up and down.* MEPHISTOPHELES
joins him.

Mephistopheles. By every despised love! By the red-hot fires of Hell! 2805

Would I knew something worse, to curse by it as well!

Faust. What is the matter? What's so badly vexing you?

I've never seen before a face that looked that way.

Mephistopheles. Off to the Devil I'd betake myself this day
If I myself were not a devil too! 2810

Faust. What has gone wrong? Why thus behave?

It suits you well to rant and rave!

Mephistopheles. Just think, the gems for Gretchen that I got,
A wretched priest has bagged the lot!
The mother gets to see the stuff 2815
And starts at once to feel a secret shuddering.
The woman has a scent that's fine enough,

Forever in her prayer-book she delights to snuff,
 And smells it out in every single thing
 If it be sacred or profane; 2820
 So in those gems she noses till it's plain
 That they held little blessing, little good.
 "My child," she cried, "to keep unrighteous gain
 Perturbs the soul, consumes the blood.
 We'll dedicate it to the Mother of our Lord, 2825
 With heavenly manna She'll reward!"¹
 Then Gretchen drew her mouth askew;
 She thought: "It is a gift-horse, it is true,
 And surely godless is not he
 Who brought it here so handsomely." 2830
 The mother summoned in a priest who came
 And when he'd scarce perceived the game,
 Got much contentment from the sight.
 He said: "So one is minded right!
 Who overcometh, winneth a crown."² 2835
 The Church hath a good stomach ever,
 Whole countries hath she gobbled down,
 And yet hath over-eaten never;
 The Church alone, dear ladies, best
 Can all unrighteous goods digest." 2840

Faust. That is a custom that men oft pursue;
 A Jew and king can do it too.

Mephistopheles. With that he bagged brooch, chain, and rings,
 As if mere toadstools were the things,
 And thanked them neither less nor more 2845
 Than were it a basketful of nuts he bore.
 He promised them all heavenly pay
 And greatly edified thereby were they.

Faust. And Gretchen?

Mephistopheles. Now sits restless. What she would
 She knows not, neither what she should, 2850
 Thinks of the jewels night and day,
 Still more on him who brought them to her.

Faust. The darling's grief distresses me.
 Quick! get new ornaments to woo her.
 The first ones were not much to see. 2855

Mephistopheles. Oh yes, Milord thinks all is mere child's-play!

Faust. Make haste and do things as I like them done.
 Into her neighbour's graces win your way!
 Devil, don't be like mush and move so slow.
 Fetch some new ornaments—up, now, and run! 2860

Mephistopheles. Yes, gracious sir, with all my heart I'll go.

Exit FAUST.

¹Cf. Revelation, 2. 17.

²*ibid.*

Such an enamoured fool would puff and blow
 Sun, moon, and stars into thin air
 Just as a pastime for his lady fair.

Exit.

THE NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE

Martha [alone]. God pardon my dear husband! He 2865

Has truly not done well by me!

Off in the world to go and roam

And leave me on the straw at home!

Sure, I did naught to vex him, truly,

And, God knows, always loved him duly. 2870

She weeps.

Perhaps he's even dead!—Oh, cruel fate!

If I but had a death-certificate!

MARGARET *enters.*

Margaret. Dame Martha!

Martha. Gretchen dear, what can it be?

Margaret. My knees almost sink under me!

There in my press I've found again 2875

Just such a casket—and of ebony,

And things! magnificent they are,

Much richer than the first, by far!

Martha. You must not tell that to your mother;

She would confess it like the other. 2880

Margaret. Ah, only look! ah, see now, do!

Martha [decking her out]. You lucky, lucky creature, you!

Margaret. Alas, these jewels I can never wear

At church or on the street, I'd never dare!

Martha. Come often over here to me 2885

And here put on the jewels secretly.

Stroll up and down before the mirror for a season;

We'll have our own sweet joy of it.

And then there'll be a feast-day or some other reason

When one lets people see them, bit by bit. 2890

A chain at first, a pearl then in your ear; your mother

Scarce will see it, we'll coin some fib or other.

Margaret. But both the caskets! Who could bring

Them both? Some wrong is in this thing!

Someone knocks.

Good Heaven! My mother—can that have been?

Martha [peeping through the curtain]. 2895

It's some strange gentleman! Come in!

MEPHISTOPHELES *enters.*

Mephistopheles. I'm very bold to walk in right away;

The pardon of the ladies I must pray.

He steps back respectfully in the presence of MARGARET.

Dame Martha Schwerdtlein I would like to find!

Martha. I'm she! What has the gentleman upon his mind? 2900

Mephistopheles [*aside to her*]. I know you now, that is enough for me.

You have a most distinguished guest, I see.

Excuse the liberty I took! If it is not too soon,

I'll come again this afternoon.

Martha [*aloud*]. Imagine, child, of all things on this earth! 2905

The gentleman thinks you of noble birth.

Margaret. I am a poor, young thing, as you can see.

The gentleman is far too kind to me.

The ornaments and jewels aren't my own.

Mephistopheles. Ah, it is not the ornaments alone; 2910

You've such a manner, so refined a way!

How glad I am that I may stay!

Martha. What is your errand? I would like to hear—

Mephistopheles. I wish my tidings brought more cheer! 2915

I hope you'll not make me repent this meeting:

Your husband's dead and sends a greeting.

Martha. Is dead? That faithful heart! Oh, woe!

My husband's dead! I'm dying! Oh!

Margaret. Ah! don't despair, Dame Martha dear!

Mephistopheles. Prepare the mournful tale to hear! 2920

Margaret. That's why I would not love while I draw breath;

Such loss as this would make me grieve to death.

Mephistopheles. Joy must sorrow, sorrow joy must know.

Martha. Relate the ending of his life to me!

Mephistopheles. In Padua he's buried, midst a row 2925

Of graves close to St. Anthony,

In holy ground that was well blessed,

Forever cool his bed of rest.

Martha. Did you bring nothing else beside?

Mephistopheles. Oh yes, a weighty, great petition: 2930

Three hundred masses are you to provide!

My pockets? They have naught. Thus endeth my commission!

Martha. What? Not a medal? Not a trinket? Such

As every journeyman deep in his pouch doth hide,

As a remembrance puts aside, 2935

And rather hungers, rather begs, than touch?

Mephistopheles. Madame, that grieves me much, but let me say,

He truly did not throw his cash away;

And deeply did he all his faults deplore,

Yes, and bewailed his ill luck still much more. 2940

Margaret. Alas, the bad luck men do meet!

Full many a requiem for him will I pray.

Mephistopheles. You're fit, I think, to wed this very day;

You are so lovable and sweet.

Margaret. That would not do as yet. Ah, no! 2945

Mephistopheles. If not a husband, be it for the while a beau.

For, of the greatest gifts of Heaven, it is one

To have within our arms a lover dear.

Margaret. That's not the custom of the country here.

Mephistopheles. Custom or not! At any rate it's done. 2950

Martha. Tell on, oh, please!

Mephistopheles. I stood where dying he was laid.

'Twas not a dung-heap; somewhat better it was made

Of rotting straw; but as a Christian did he die,

Thinking he owed far greater penance for his life.

"How deeply must I hate myself," I heard him cry, 2955

"To leave my business so, my wife!

Alas, the recollection's killing me.

If she could but forgive me in this life!"

Martha [weeping]. The good man! I forgave him long since—
truthfully!

Mephistopheles. "But she, God knows, was more to blame than I!" 2960

Martha. He lies! What! at the grave's brink—so to lie!

Mephistopheles. He fabled as he breathed his last, be sure,

If I am only half a connoisseur.

"I could not gape for pastime," so he said;

"First children, then to get them bread, 2965

And bread in all the broadest sense, I swear;

Yet never could I eat in peace my share."

Martha. To all my love, fidelity, he gave no thought,

Nor to my drudgery by night and day?

Mephistopheles. Not so; he thought of it most warmly as he ought. 2970

He said: "From Malta once I sailed away

And ardently for wife and children did I pray.

Then Heaven favoured us in gracious measure

Because our ship a Turkish vessel caught

Which to the mighty Sultan bore a treasure. 2975

Then valour was rewarded as was fit,

And I received moreover, as one ought,

My own well-measured share of it."

Martha. Oh what? Oh where? Perhaps he buried it?

Mephistopheles. Who knows where the four winds have carried 2980
it?

A pretty miss adopted him as her dear friend

When he, in Naples strange, was circulating;

She gave him love and troth so unabating

That he felt the results until his blessed end.

Martha. The scamp! The robber of his children, he! 2985

And all that want and all that misery

Could not prevent the shameful life he led!

Mephistopheles. Well, he has paid for it and now he's dead.

If I were now in your place here,

I'd mourn for him a well-bred year, 2990

Meanwhile be on the lookout for a sweetheart new.

Martha. Ah, God! Another like the first I knew,
 I'll hardly find on earth again!
 There scarce could be a dearer little fool than mine.
 Only to roam he was too much inclined, and then 2995
 He loved those foreign women, also foreign wine,
 And that accursed dice-throwing.

Mephistopheles. Now, now, things could have gone and still be
 going,
 If he perchance as much in you
 Had overlooked on his part too. 3000
 I swear, on terms like these, if you'd agree,
 I'd ask you to exchange a ring with me.

Martha. The gentleman is pleased to jest.

Mephistopheles [*aside*]. Now to make off betimes were best!
 She'd hold the very Devil to his word. 3005
To GRETCHEN.

How is your heart? Has it been stirred?

Margaret. What means the gentleman?

Mephistopheles [*aside*]. You innocent, sweet dear!
Aloud.

Ladies, good-by!

Margaret. Good-by!

Martha. Oh, quickly let me hear

The evidence I'd like to have and save:

Where, how, and when my darling died and where his grave. 3010

Of order I have always been a friend,

And in our *Weekly* I would like to read his end.

Mephistopheles. Yes, my good woman, what two witnesses attest

Is always known as truth made manifest,

And with me I've a splendid mate. 3015

I tell you, I'll take him before a magistrate.

I'll bring him here.

Martha. Oh, do that, do!

Mephistopheles. And this young lady, will she be here too?

A gallant chap! and travelled far has he

And shows young ladies every courtesy. 3020

Margaret. Before the gentleman I'd flush with shame.

Mephistopheles. Before no king this earth could name.

Martha. Behind my house and in my garden then,

This evening we'll await the gentlemen.

A STREET

FAUST. MEPHISTOPHELES.

Faust. How goes it? Will it work? soon win the game? 3025

Mephistopheles. Ah, bravo! Do I find you all aflame?

Gretchen will in a brief time be your own.

This evening you will see her all alone

At Neighbour Martha's; that's a woman made
For go-between and gypsy trade.

3030

Faust 'Tis well!

Mephistopheles. Yet something's wanted from us too.

Faust. One service may demand another as its due.

Mephistopheles. We have in due form only to attest

That her good spouse's outstretched limbs repose

In Padua, in consecrated soil at rest.

3035

Faust. Most wise! We first must make the journey, I suppose!

Mephistopheles. *Sancta Simplicitas!* Of that there is no need;

You don't know much, but still depose.

Faust. If that's your best, I tear your plan asunder.

Mephistopheles. O saintly man! Then you would be a saint
indeed!

3040

Is it the first time in your life

You've borne false witness? Well, I wonder!

Of God, the world, and what therein is rife,

Of man, what stirs within his heart and brain,

Have you no definition given with might and main?

3045

With brazen brow and dauntless breast?

And if you'll only probe things truly,

You knew of them—you must confess it duly—

No more than of this Schwerdtlein's death and place of rest!

Faust. You are and you remain a liar, sophist too.

3050

Mephistopheles. Yes, if one did not have a little deeper view.

Will you not presently cajole

Poor Gretchen—in all honour too—and swear

To her the love of all your soul?

Faust. Aye, swear it from my heart.

Mephistopheles. Fine, I declare!

3055

Then there'll be talk of love, fidelity eternal,

Of one almighty force supernal—

Will that too issue from your heart alone?

Faust. Have done! It will!—And when I'm feeling,

When for the feeling, for my senses' reeling,

3060

I seek for names and yet find none,

Then through the world with every sense sweep on,

Toward all the lottiest phrases, grasping, turn,

And this the glow from which I burn.

Endless, eternal, aye, eternal name,

3065

Is that a devilish, lying game?

Mephistopheles. And yet I'm right!

Faust. Take heed! Mark this from me,

I beg of you, and spare my lungs:

He who maintains he's right—if his the gift of tongues—

Will have the last word certainly.

3070

So come, this prating rouses my disgust;

I'll say you're right, especially since I must.

A GARDEN

MARGARET on FAUST'S arm, MARTHA and MEPHISTOPHELES, walking up and down.

Margaret. I feel the gentleman is only sparing me,
 So condescends that I am all confused.
 A traveller is so much used
 To bear with things good-naturedly.
 I know too well, my poor talk hardly can
 Amuse you, an experienced man.

3075

Faust. One glance from you, one word, more entertains
 Than all the wisdom that this world contains.
He kisses her hand.

3080

Margaret.
 Don't incommode yourself! How can my hand be kissed by you?
 It is so ugly and so rough!
 What work is there that I've not had to do?
 My mother's more than strict enough.

They pass on.

Martha. And you, sir, are you always on the go?
Mephistopheles. Alas, that business, duty, drive us so!
 With how much pain one goes from many a place,
 And even so, one simply must not stay.

3085

Martha. In active years perhaps 'tis well this way,
 Thus freely round and round the world to race;
 But then the evil times come on apace,
 And as a bachelor to drag on to the grave alone,
 That has been good for no one, you must own.

3090

Mephistopheles. With dread I see it far away.

Martha. Then, worthy sir, consider while you may!
They pass on.

3095

Margaret. Yes, out of sight is out of mind!
 To you so easy is this courtesy;
 But many friends you always find,
 More sensible than I can be.

Faust. O dear one! Trust me, that which men call sense
 Is oft but vanity and narrowness.

3100

Margaret. But why? Tell me.

Faust. Ah, that simplicity, that innocence,
 That neither its own sacred value knows!
 That lowliness, humility, those gifts supreme
 That loving Nature's bounteous hand bestows—

3105

Margaret. Though you may think of me a moment only,
 I'll have, ah, time enough to think of you and dream.

Faust. You are then often lonely?

Margaret. Yes, for our household is but small,
 And yet one has to look to all.

3110

We have no maid—must cook, sweep, sew, and knit,
And early run about and late;
And Mother is in all of it
So accurate!

Not that in spending she must feel confined; 3115
We could branch out far more than many do.

My father left a pretty property behind,
A house outside the town, a little garden too.

Yet now I've pretty quiet days. My brother,
He is a soldier lad. 3120
My little sister's dead.

A deal of trouble with the child did I go through;
Yet once more would I gladly undertake the bother,
I loved the child so much.

Faust. An angel, if like you.

Margaret. I brought it up and it was fond of me. 3125

Father had died when it was born;
We gave our mother up for lost, so worn
And wretched, lying there, was she.

And she grew well so slowly, bit by bit,
She could not think of suckling it 3130

Herself, the poor babe pitifully wee,
And so I brought it up, and quite alone,

With milk and water; so it became my own.
Upon my arm and in my lap it threw
Itself about, was friendly too, and grew. 3135

Faust. You've surely felt the purest happiness.

Margaret. But also many weary hours, I must confess.

The wee thing's cradle stood at night
Beside my bed; it scarcely might

Just stir; I was awake; 3140

Sometimes I had to give it drink, sometimes to take
It in with me, sometimes from bed arise

And dandle up and down the room to hush its cries;

And at the wash-tub stand at daylight's break,
Then to the marketing and to the hearth attend. 3145

Tomorrow too just like today, so without end.

Thus, sir, one's spirits are not always of the best,
But in return one relishes both food and rest.

They pass on.

Martha. Poor women have things hard, it's true;

A bachelor's not easy to convert. 3150

Mephistopheles. It but depends upon the like of you,

For then my present ways I might desert.

Martha. Speak out, sir, is there none you've ever met?

Has your heart never bound itself as yet?

Mephistopheles. One's own good wife and hearth, we're told, 3155
Are worth as much as pearls and gold.

Martha. I mean, if you have never felt a passion?

Mephistopheles. I've always been received in very courteous fashion.

Martha. I mean: has love in earnest never stirred your breast?

Mephistopheles. With ladies one should never dare to jest. 3160

Martha. Ah, you don't understand me!

Mephistopheles. That distresses me!

And yet I understand—most kindly would you be.

They pass on.

Faust. Did you, O little angel, straightway recognize

Me when I came into the garden?

Margaret. Did you not see that I cast down my eyes? 3165

Faust. That liberty I took, you'll pardon?

The daring impudence that day

When coming from the church you went your way?

Margaret. I was confused; to me it never had
Occurred; no one could say of me what's bad. 3170

Ah, thought I, in your manner, then, has he

Seen something bold, unmaidenly?

It seemed to strike him right away

To have some dealings with this girl without delay.

Yet I confess I know not why my heart 3175

Began at once to stir to take your part.

But with myself I was right vexed, it's true,

That I could not become more vexed toward you.

Faust. Sweet darling!

Margaret. Wait a bit!

She plucks a star-flower and picks off the petals, one after the other.

Faust. What's that? A nosegay?

Margaret. No,

It's just a game.

Faust. What?

Margaret. You will laugh at me, do go! 3180

She pulls off the petals and murmurs.

Faust. What are you murmuring?

Margaret [half aloud]. He loves me—loves me not!

Faust. Sweet, heavenly vision!

Margaret [goes on]. Loves me—not—loves me—not—

Plucking off the last petal with lovely joy.

He loves me!

Faust. Yes, my child! and let this blossom's word

Be oracle of gods to you! He loves you!

3185

You understand that word and what it means? He loves you!

He seizes both her hands.

Margaret. I'm all a-tremble!

Faust. Oh, shudder not! But let this look,

Let this hand-pressure say to you

What is unspeakable:

3190

To give one's self up wholly and to feel
 A rapture that must be eternal!
 Eternal!—for its end would be despair.
 No! no end! no end!

MARGARET *presses his hands, frees herself, and runs away. He stands a moment in thought and then follows her.*

Martha [*coming*]. The night comes on.

Mephistopheles. Yes, and we must away. 3195

Martha. I'd ask you make a longer stay;

But it's a wicked place, here roundabout,

As if no one had naught to carry through

And naught to do

But gape at all the neighbours going in and out. 3200

One's talked about, do all one may.

And our dear couple?

Mephistopheles. Up that walk I saw them whirr,

The wanton butterflies!

Martha. He seems to take to her.

Mephistopheles. And she to him. So runs the world away.

A GARDEN HOUSE

MARGARET *runs in, hides behind the door, holds the tip of her fingers to her lips, and peers through the crevice.*

Margaret. He's coming!

Faust [*enters*]. Rogue, it's thus you tease! 3205

I've caught you!

He kisses her.

Margaret [*embracing him and returning the kiss*].

Best of men, I love you from my heart!

MEPHISTOPHELES *knocks*.

Faust [*stamping*]. Who's there?

Mephistopheles. A friend!

Faust. A beast!

Mephistopheles. I think it's time to part.

Martha [*enters*]. Yes, sir, it's late.

Faust. Mayn't I escort you, please?

Margaret. My mother would—Good-by!

Faust. Must I go then?

Good by!

Martha. Adieu!

Margaret. But soon to meet again!

3210

FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES *exeunt*.

Margaret. Dear God! The things that such a man

Can think of! Everything! I only can

Stand there before him shamed and quivering

And answer "Yes" to everything.

I am a poor unknowing child, and he—

3215

I do not see what he can find in me.

Exit.

FOREST AND CAVERN

Faust [alone]. Spirit sublime, thou gav'st me, gav'st me all

For which I prayed. Thou hast not turned in vain

Thy countenance to me in fire and flame.

Thou gav'st me glorious nature as a royal realm,

3220

The power to feel and to enjoy her. Not

Amazed, cold visits only thou allow'st;

Thou grantest me to look in her deep breast

Even as in the bosom of a friend.

Thou leadest past a series of the living

3225

Before me, teaching me to know my brothers

In silent covert and in air and water.

And when the storm roars screeching through the forest,

When giant fir tree plunges, sweeping down

And crushing neighbouring branches, neighbouring trunks,

3230

And at its fall the hills, dull, hollow, thunder:

Then leadest thou me to the cavern safe,

Show'st me myself, and my own heart becomes

Aware of deep mysterious miracles.

And when before my gaze the stainless moon

3235

Soothing ascends on high: from rocky walls

And from damp covert float and soar about me

The silvery forms of a departed world

And temper contemplation's austere joy.

Oh, that for man naught perfect ever is,

3240

I now do feel. Together with this rapture

That brings me near and nearer to the gods,

Thou gav'st the comrade whom I now no more

Can do without, though, cold and insolent,

He lowers me in my own sight, transforms

3245

With but a word, a breath, thy gifts to nothing.

Within my breast he fans with busy zeal

A savage fire for that fair, lovely form.

Thus from desire I reel on to enjoyment

And in enjoyment languish for desire.

3250

Mephistopheles [appears]. Have you now led this life quite long enough?

How can it long have any charm for you?

'Tis well, indeed, for once to try the stuff,

But then, in turn, away to something new!

Faust. I wish that you had something else to do

3255

Than on a happy day to plague me like a pest.

Mephistopheles. Now, now! I'll gladly let you rest!

You do not dare to say this seriously.

A comrade mad, ungracious, cross,
 Would truly be a trifling loss. 3260
 The livelong day one's hands are full as they can be.
 What he would like for one to do or leave alone,
 His lordship's face will never let one see.

Faust. Sol That is just the proper tone:
 You now want thanks for boring me. 3265

Mephistopheles. Without me how would you, Earth's wretched son,
 Have kept on living? What would you have done?
 Your hodge-podge of imagination—balderdash!
 At least I've cured you now and then of all that trash.
 In fact, if I had not been here at all, 3270
 You'd long since sauntered off this earthly ball.
 Why here within the cavern's rocky rent
 Thus sit your life away so owl-like and alone?
 Why from the sodden moss and dripping stone
 Sip, like a toad, your nourishment? 3275
 A fine sweet way to pass the time. I'll bet
 The Doctor's in your body yet.

Faust. Can you conceive what new vitality
 This walking in the desert works in me?
 Yes, could you sense a force like this, 3280
 You would be devil enough to grudge my bliss.

Mephistopheles. It's more than earthly, such delight!
 To lie in night and dew on mountain height.
 Embracing earth and heaven blissfully,
 Puffing one's self and deeming one a deity; 3285
 To burrow through earth's marrow, onward pressed
 By prescient impulse, feel within one's breast
 All six days' work, in haughty power enjoy and know
 I can't tell what, soon all creation overflow
 In rapturous love, lost to all sight the child of clay, 3290
 And then the lofty intuition

With a gesture.

Ending—I dare not say in what fruition!

Faust Shame on you!

Mephistopheles. That's not to your liking, eh?
 You have the moral right to cry out "Shame!"
 Before chaste ears one must not name , 3295
 What chaste hearts can't dispense with, just the same!
 In short, I grudge you not the pleasure of evasion,
 Of lying to yourself upon occasion;
 But you will not stick long to that, it's clear.
 Again you are already spent, 3300
 And if this goes on longer, you'll be rent
 To shreds by madness or by agony and fear.
 Enough of this! Your darling sits at home apart
 And more and more she's feeling caged and sad.

Your image never leaves her mind and heart, 3305

The all-consuming love she bears you is half mad.

First came your passion like the furious current

Of brooklets swollen high from melted snow.

Into her heart you poured the torrent,

And now again your brooklet's running low. 3310

I think, instead of sitting throned in forests wild

It would become so great a lord

To seek the poor, young, silly child

And give her for her love some due reward.

To her the time grows pitifully long. 3315

She stands beside the window, sees the clouds that stray

Over the old town wall and far away.

"Were I a little bird!" so goes her song,

All day long and half the night long.

She's mostly sad, at times is gay, 3320

At times is quite wept out, and then,

It seems, is calm again,

And is in love alway.

Faust. Serpent! Serpent!

Mephistopheles [*aside*]. Good! I'll bet

That I will get you yet! 3325

Faust. Infamous fiend! Off, get you hence!

And do not name that lovely woman!

Nor yet desire for her sweet body summon

Again before my half-distracted sense!

Mephistopheles. What would you then? She thinks that you have
flown, 3330

And half and half you are, as you must own.

Faust. I'm near to her, however far I were,

I never can forget nor yet lose her;

I envy even the Body of the Lord

Whenever her sweet lips touch the Adored. 3335

Mephistopheles. Well said, my friend! Oft have I envied you indeed

The twin-pair that among the roses feed.¹

Faust. Off, pander!

Mephistopheles. Fine! You rail and it's a joke to me.

The God who fashioned youth and maid

At once perceived the noblest trade 3340

Was that He make them opportunity.

Be off! That is a cause of woe!

It's to your darling's chamber you're to go,

Not to your death, indeed!

Faust. How am I, in her arms, by Heaven blessed? 3345

Though I grow warm upon her breast,

Do I not always feel her need?

Am I not still the fugitive? unhoused and roaming?

¹Cf. The Song of Solomon, 4. 5.

The monster without goal or rest
 That like a cataract from rock to rock roared foaming 3350
 To the abyss, by greed and frenzy headlong pressed?
 She at one side, still with her childlike senses furled,
 Upon the alpine meadow in the cottage small,
 With all her homely joys and cares, her all,
 Within that little world; 3355
 And I, the God-detested,
 Not enough had I
 That all the rocks I wrested
 And into pieces made them fly!
 Her did I have to undermine, her peace!
 Thou, Hell, didst have to have this sacrifice! 3360
 Help, Devil, make it brief, this time of agony!
 What must be done, let it at once be so!
 Then may her fate plunge crushing down on me,
 And she with me to ruin go! 3365
Mephistopheles. How it seethes again and how again it glows!
 You fool, go and console your pretty dear!
 When such a brain as yours no outlet knows,
 It straightway fancies that the end is near.
 Long life to him who bravely dares! 3370
 At other times you've been of quite a devilish mind.
 Naught more absurd in this world can I find
 Than is a devil who despairs.

GRETCHEN'S ROOM

Gretchen [at her spinning-wheel, alone].

My peace is gone,
 —My heart is sore— 3375
 I'll find it, ah, never,
 No, nevermore!
 When he is not near,
 My grave is here;
 My world is all 3380
 Turned into gall
 My poor, poor head
 Is all a-craze,
 And my poor wits
 All in a maze. 3385
 My peace is gone,
 —My heart is sore—
 I'll find it, ah, never,
 No, nevermore!
 To see him only 3390
 At the window I stay,
 To meet him only

THE FIRST PART

83

From home I stray.

His noble form,
His bearing so high,
And his lips so smiling,
And the power of his eye,

3395

His flowing speech's
Magic bliss,
His hands' fond clasp,
And, ah, his kiss!

3400

My peace is gone,
—My heart is sore—
I'll find it, ah, never,
No, nevermore!

3405

My bosom yearns
Toward him to go.
Ah! might I clasp him
And hold him so,

And kiss his lips
As fain would I,
Upon his kisses
To swoon and die!

3410

MARTHA'S GARDEN

MARGARET. FAUST.

Margaret. Promise me, Henry!

Faust. What I can!

Margaret. How do you feel about religion? Tell me, pray.

3415

You are a dear, good-hearted man,
But I believe you've little good of it to say.

Faust. Hush, hush, my child! You feel my love for you.

For those I love, I'd give my blood and body too,
Would no one of his feelings or of church bereave.

3420

Margaret. That's not enough. We must believe!

Faust. Must we?

Margaret. Ah, could I but impress you, Henry dear!

The Holy Sacraments you also don't revere.

Faust. I do revere them.

Margaret. But without desire, alas!

It's long since you confessed or went to mass.

3425

Do you believe in God?

Faust. My darling, who dare say:

"I believe in God"? You may

Ask priest or sage, and you'll receive

What only seems to mock and stay

The asker.

Margaret. So you don't believe?

3430

Faust. Sweet vision, don't misunderstand me now!

Who dare name Him?

And who avow:

"I believe in Him"?

Who feels and would

3435

Have hardihood

To say: "I don't believe in Him"?

The All-Enfolder,

The All-Upholder,

Enfolds, upholds He not

3440

You, me, Himself?

Do not the heavens over-arch us yonder?

Does not the earth lie firm beneath?

Do not eternal stars rise friendly

Looking down upon us?

3445

Look I not, eye in eye, on you,

And do not all things throng

Toward your head and heart,

Weaving in mystery eternal,

Invisible, visible, near to you?

3450

Fill up your heart with it, great though it is,

And when you're wholly in the feeling, in its bliss,

Name it then as you will,

Name it Happiness! Heart! Love! God!

I have no name for that!

3455

Feeling is all in all;

Name is but sound and smoke,

Beclouding Heaven's glow.

Margaret. That's all quite nice and good to know;

Much the same way the preacher talks of it,

3460

Only in words that differ just a bit.

Faust. Wherever the light of Heaven doth shine,

All hearts repeat it, everywhere, and each

In its own speech;

Then why not I in mine?

3465

Margaret. To hear it thus, it's passable, and still I doubt it;

In spite of it all there is some hitch about it.

For you have no Christianity.

Faust. Dear child!

Margaret. It long has been a grief to me

That I see you in such company.

3470

Faust. How so?

Margaret. The man who is with you as your mate,

Deep in my inmost soul I hate.

In all my whole life there's not a thing

That's given my heart so sharp a sting

As that man's hostile face has done.

3475

Faust. Don't fear him, my precious one!

Margaret. His presence makes my blood run so chill,
 And toward all others I bear good-will;
 But although to see you I yearn and long,
 With uncanny horror that man makes me shrink. 3480
 He is a knave, I really do think!

God forgive me if I'm doing him wrong!

Faust. Such queer birds there must also be.

Margaret. I'd not like to live with one like him!
 If he but comes inside the door, you see 3485
 Him look always so scoffingly
 And so half grim.

For nothing has he any real sympathy;
 It's written on his forehead, one can see
 That in his sight no soul can be dear. 3490

I feel so happy in your arm,
 So free, so yielding, and so warm,
 And yet my heart grows stifled whenever he is near.

Faust. O you foreboding angel, you!

Margaret. It overcomes me so much too, 3495

That when he but only comes our way,
 I even think I've no more love for you,
 And when he's there, I nevermore could pray;
 That eats into my heart; and so you too
 Must feel, dear Henry, as I do. 3500

Faust. You simply have antipathy!

Margaret. I must go now.

Faust. Ah, can there never be
 Upon your bosom one calm, little hour of rest,
 To mingle soul with soul, press breast to breast?

Margaret. Ah, if I only slept apart! 3505
 For you I'd gladly leave the bolt undrawn tonight,
 But then my mother's sleep is light;
 And were we found by her, dear heart,
 I would fall dead upon the spot!

Faust. No need of that! You angel, fear it not! 3510
 Here is a little phial! Only three
 Drops in her drink, and pleasantly
 Deep slumber will enfold her like a charm!

Margaret. For your sake what would I not do?
 I hope it will not do her harm! 3515

Faust. If so, my love, would I thus counsel you?

Margaret. If I but look at you, O best of men,
 I know not what compels me to your will.
 I've done so much, your wishes to fulfil,
 There's almost nothing left for me to do. 3520

Exit.

MEPHISTOPHELES appears.

Mephistopheles. The little monkey! Is she gone?

Faust.

You've spied again!

Mephistopheles. I've heard it all and understood,

The Doctor was put through the catechisms.

I hope that it will do you good.

Girls have a great desire to know, it's true,

3525

If one is sleek and pious, true to ancient isms.

They think: if there he knuckles, us he'll follow too.

Faust. You monster, you've not seen

How this soul true and dear,

Full of the faith she hath,

3530

That quite alone must mean

Eternal bliss to her, torments herself with awful fear

To think the man she loves is doomed by endless wrath.

Mephistopheles. You lover super-sensual, sensual too,

A damsel leads you by the nose.

3535

Faust. O monstrous progeny of fire and filthy spew!*Mephistopheles.* And physiognomy quite masterly she knows.

She feels she knows not how when I'm about,

And in my mask a hidden meaning sees.

She feels that I'm a dæmon, without doubt,

3540

Perhaps the very Devil, if you please!

Well now—tonight?

Faust.

What's that to you?

Mephistopheles.

I have my pleasure in it too!

AT THE WELL

GRETCHEN and LISBETH with jugs.

Lisbeth. Of our friend Babbie you've not heard?*Gretchen.* I seldom go where people are—no, not a word.

3545

Lisbeth. It's true, Sibylla told me so today!

So after all she's played the fool, I say.

That comes of all her airs!

Gretchen.

How so?

Lisbeth.

It stinks.

She's feeding two now when she eats and drinks.

Gretchen. Ah!

3550

Lisbeth. So now it's served her right, in truth.

How long she's hung upon that youth!

That was a promenading.

To village and to dance parading!

Had ever as the first to shine,

3555

He always courted her with tarts and wine;

She fancied her beauty was something fine,

Was yet so lost to honour she had no shame

To take his presents as they came.

'Twas cuddling and kissing, on and on;

3560

And now, you see, the floweret's gone!

Gretchen. The poor thing!

Lisbeth. What! You pity her? I don't!

When girls like us were spinning, mother's wont

At night was never to let us out,

But she! With her sweet love she'd stand about.

3565

On the door-bench, in the hallway dim,

No hour became too long for her or for him.

Now she can knuckle under in full view

And in a sinner's shift do penance too.

Gretchen. He'll take her of course to be his wife.

3570

Lisbeth. He'd be a fool! A lively lad

Has plenty elbow-room elsewhere.

Besides, he's gone.

Gretchen. That is not fair!

Lisbeth. If she gets him, she'll find her luck is bad.

The boys will dash her wreath on the floor,

3575

And we will strew chaff before her door.

Exit.

Gretchen [*going home*]. How I could once so stoutly flay

When some poor maiden went astray!

How I could find no words enough

At others' sins to rail and scoff!

3580

Black as it seemed, I made it blacker still,

But never black enough to suit my will;

I blessed myself! So proud I've been!

Now I'm myself laid bare to sin!

Yet—all that drove me, all I would,

3585

God! was so dear! ah, was so good!

THE RAMPARTS

*In a niche of the wall a devotional image of the Mater Dolorosa
with jugs for flowers in front of it.*

Gretchen [*is putting fresh flowers in the jugs*].

Oh, bend Thou,

Mother of Sorrows; send Thou

A look of pity on my pain.

Thine heart's blood welling

3590

With pangs past telling,

Thou gazest where Thy Son hangs slain.

Thou, heavenward gazing,

Art deep sighs raising

On high for His and for Thy pain.

3595

Who feeleth

How reeleth

This pain in every bone?
 All that makes my poor heart shiver,
 Why it yearneth and doth quiver, 3600
 Thou dost know and Thou alone!

Wherever I am going,
 How woe, woe, woe is growing,
 Ah, how my bosom aches!
 When lonely watch I'm keeping, 3605
 I'm weeping, weeping, weeping,
 My heart within me breaks.

The plants before my window
 I wet with tears—ah, me!—
 As in the early morning 3610
 I plucked these flowers for Thee.

Ah, let my room but borrow
 The early sunlight red,
 I sit in all my sorrow
 Already on my bed. 3615

Help! rescue me from death and stain!
 Oh, bend Thou,
 Mother of Sorrows; send Thou
 A look of pity on my pain!

NIGHT

The street before GRETCHEEN'S door.

Valentine [a soldier, Gretchen's brother].

When I've sat with a jovial crowd 3620
 Where many a man has boasted loud
 And fellows then have praised to me
 The beauty of maidens noisily
 And drowned the praises with full cup,
 Upon my elbow well propped up 3625
 Secure in my repose I've sat and so
 Heard all the braggadocio.
 I've stroked my whiskers, smiling, bland;
 And grasped the full cup in my hand
 And said: "Let each man have his way! 3630
 But is there one in all the land
 Like my dear Gretchen, who can hold
 A candle to my sister? Say!"
 Hear! hear! clink-clink! about it went;
 Some cried: "He's right! She is of all 3635

Her sex the pride and ornament!"
 Then dumb sat all the boasters bold.
 And now!—I could tear out my hair
 And try to run straight up a wall!
 With stinging speeches, nose in air,
 Each scurvy knave may taunt and sneer!
 I'll sit like one accursed by debt

3640

And at each casual word I'll sweat!
 Though I would like to smash and maul them,
 Still, liars I could never call them.

3645

What's coming here? What sneaks in view?
 If I mistake not, there are two.
 If he is one, swift at his hide I'll drive!
 He shall not leave this spot alive!

FAUST. MEPHISTOPHELES.

Faust. How from the window of yon sacristy
 Upward the glow of that eternal taper shimmers,
 And weak and weaker sideward glimmers,
 And darkness round it presses nigh!

3650

So in my bosom do night shadows gather.
Mephistopheles. I'm like a sentimental tom-cat, rather,
 That stealthy sneaks by fire-escapes,
 Along the walls quite softly scrapes.
 I feel quite like myself in this, I must confess:
 A bit of thievish greed, a bit of rammishness.
 So even now, I feel, through every vein
 Is spooking glorious Walpurgis Night.
 Just two days hence it comes again.

3655

3660

Then why one keeps awake, one knows aright!

Faust. Meanwhile does not a treasure rise in air
 That I see glimmering back there?

3665

Mephistopheles. Ere long you can proceed with pleasure
 To raise the kettle and its treasure.

Not long ago I took a squint,
 Saw splendid lion-dollars¹ in 't.

Faust. But not a trinket, not a ring,
 To ornament my darling girl?

3670

Mephistopheles. I saw among them some such thing,
 A kind of necklace made of pearl.

Faust. So it is well! I do not find it pleasant
 To go to her without a present.

3675

Mephistopheles. It should not really trouble you
 To have some pleasure gratis too.

Now since the sky glows with a starry throng,
 A very masterpiece you'll hear.

I'll sing to her a moral song,

3680

¹Coins minted first perhaps in Bohemia with the royal Bohemian lion stamped on them, perhaps first in Louvain, which the Germans called Löwen (Lions).

More surely to beguile her ear.

He sings to his guitar.

What dost before
Thy lover's door,
Katrín, before
The world with light is laden? 3685
Let, let it be!
He lets in thee
As maid, but he
Will let thee out no maiden.

Maids, heed aright! 3690
Is it done quite?
Ah, then good-night!
Poor things, he will not linger!
For your own sake,
No robber take, 3695
When love he'd make,
Save with the ring on finger!¹

Valentine [steps forth]. Whom lure you here? God's-clement!

O you rat-catcher, cursèd slinger!
To the Devil first the instrument! 3700
To the Devil afterwards the singer!

Mephistopheles. He's broken my guitar! There's no more use in it.

Valentine. A skull's now going to be split!

Mephistopheles [to FAUST]. Don't give way, Doctor! Quick! Don't
tarry!

Keep close by as I lead the way. 3705

Out with your duster, out, I say!

Thrust hard at him and I will parry.

Valentine. Then parry that!

Mephistopheles. And why not, pray?

Valentine. That too!

Mephistopheles. Sure!

Valentine. I believe the Devil's in the fray!

What's this? My hand's already going lame. 3710

Mephistopheles [to FAUST]. Thrust home!

Valentine [falls]. O woe!

Mephistopheles. Now is the lubber
tame!

But quick away! We must at once be gone,

For even now a murd'rous cry arises.

With the police quite nicely I get on

But fare but ill with the assize. 3715

Martha [at a window]. Out, neighbours, out!

Gretchen [at a window]. Here, bring a light!

Martha [as above]. They rail and scuffle, yell and fight.

¹Cf. Ophelia's song, *Hamlet*, iv, 5.

People. Already one is lying there! He's dead!

Martha [coming out]. The murderers! Where have they run?

Gretchen [coming out]. Who's lying here?

People. Your mother's son!

3720

Gretchen. Almighty One! What misery!

Valentine. I'm dying! That is quickly said

And quicker still can be.

Why, women, stand and howl and wail?

Come here and listen to my tale!

3725

They all come around him.

My Gretchen, see! Young are you still

And shrewd enough by no means quite.

You manage your affairs but ill.

In confidence I tell you, what is more,

Since once for all now you're a whore,

So be one then outright!

3730

Gretchen. My brother! God! What words to me!

Valentine. In this game let our Lord God be!

Now what is done is done, alas!

And as things can, so will they come to pass.

3735

With one you started secretly,

And more of them there soon will be.

When a dozen men have had you down,

You're common then to all the town.

When Shame at first is given birth,

3740

She is smuggled in upon this earth,

And then the veil of night is thrown

Around her ears and head;

Yes, one would gladly murder her instead.

But when both proud and great she's grown,

3745

By daylight then she goes forth openly,

And yet has not become more fair to see.

The loathsomer her face, straightway

The more she seeks the light of day.

I see the time already nearing

3750

When townsfolk, honest and God-fearing,

As from an infectious body shrinking,

Past you, you whore, will hurry slinking.

In heart and body you'll despair

If they but look you in the face!

3755

No more a golden chain you'll wear,

No more beside the altar take your place!

In fine lace collar to your pleasure

You'll dance no more a happy measure.

In some dark corner you will hide

3760

Among beggars and cripples, side by side.

Even if God His pardon give,

On earth you shall accursèd live!

- Martha.* Commend your soul to God! Can it then be
 You'll cap your other sins with blasphemy? 3765
- Valentine.* Could I but to your withered body limp,
 You shameless woman, coupling pimp!
 Then I indeed might hope to win
 Forgiveness plenty for each sin.
- Gretchen.* My brother! Oh, what agony! 3770
- Valentine.* I tell you, let the weeping be!
 When you from honour went apart,
 You stabbed me to the very heart.
 Now through the slumber of the grave
 I go to God, a soldier brave. 3775
- Dies.*

CATHEDRAL

Mass, Organ, and Singing.

- GRETCHEN *among many people*, EVIL SPIRIT *behind GRETCHEN*.
- Evil Spirit.* How different, Gretchen, it was with thee,
 When thou, still full of innocence,
 Here to the altar cam'st,
 Out of the well-worn, little book
 Didst prattle prayers, 3780
 Half childhood's play,
 Half God in thy heart!
 Gretchen!
 Where are thy thoughts?
 Within thy heart 3785
 What foul misdeed?
 Is it for thy mother's soul thou prayest, who
 Through thee to long, long torment fell asleep?
 Upon thy door-sill, whose the blood?
 —Beneath thy heart already 3790
 Is there not stirring swelling life
 That tortureth itself and thee
 With its foreboding presence?
- Gretchen.* Woel Woel
 Would I were free of thoughts 3795
 That go within me hither and thither
 Against my will!
- Choir.* *Dies irae, dies illa*
*Solvat saeculum in favilla.*¹
Sound of the organ.
- Evil Spirit.* Wrath grips thee! 3800
 The last trumpet sounds!
 The graves are trembling!

¹"Day of wrath, that day shall dissolve the world in ashes": the first lines of the dirge on Judgment Day, composed in the thirteenth century, probably by Thomas of Celano.

And thy heart,
 From rest in ashes
 To flaming torments
 Raised up, re-created,
 Trembling ascends! 3805

Gretchen. Would I were away from here!
 It seems to me as if the organ
 Would stifle my breathing,
 As if my inmost heart 3810
 Were melted by the singing.

Choir. *Judex ergo cum sedebit,
 Quidquid latet adparebit,
 Nil inultum remanebit.* 3815

Gretchen. I'm stifling here!
 The walls and pillars
 Imprison me!
 The vaulted arches
 Crush me!—Air! 3820

Evil Spirit. Hide thyself! Sin and shame
 Remain not hidden.
 Air? Light?
 Woe's thee!

Choir. *Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?
 Quem patronum rogaturus,
 Cum vix justus sit securus?* 3825

Evil Spirit. The faces of the Glorified
 Will turn away from thee;
 To thee their hands to offer
 Will the Pure shudder. 3830
 Woe!

Choir. *Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?*

Gretchen. Neighbour! Your smelling-salts!
She falls in a swoon.

WALPURGIS NIGHT¹

THE HARTZ MOUNTAINS

Region of Schierke and Elend.

FAUST. MEPHISTOPHELES.

Mephistopheles. If you'd a broomstick, wouldn't that be fine? 3835

I wish the sturdiest he-goat were mine.

Our goal's still far off and this way is rough.

Faust. As long as I feel fresh afoot, I say

¹The night between April 30 and May 1, when witches are reputed to hold carnival on the Brocken, or Brocksberg, a peak about 3600 feet high and the most lofty in the Hartz Mountains. Walpurgis was an English Benedictine nun long resident in Germany (eighth century).

For me this knotted staff's enough.

What good is it when one cuts short the way?

3840

To loiter through the labyrinth of valleys

And then to mount these cliffs, whence sallies

The ever bubbling, leaping spring,

That is the spice that makes such paths worth wandering!

Already springtime in the birches stirs,

3845

It's even felt already by the firs;

Should not our members also feel effect?

Mephistopheles. Forsooth, no trace of that can I detect!

I'm feeling wintry in my every limb;

Upon my path I should like frost and snow.

3850

How sadly rises, red and incomplete, the dim

Moon's disc with its belated glow

Lighting so ill that at each step or so

One runs against a rock, against a tree!

Let's ask a will-o'-the-wisp to lend his flicker!

3855

I see one there just flaming merrily.

Hey, friend! May I bid you to help us get on quicker?

Why will you blaze away so uselessly?

Do be so good and light us up the hill!

Will-o'-the-Wisp. Out of respect for you I hope I'll find

3860

A way to curb my nature's flighty will;

Our course, as heretofore, is zigzag still.

Mephistopheles. Ho! Ho! You think you'll imitate mankind.

Go on and in the Devil's name, but straight! Now mind!

Or else I'll blow your flickering light clean out.

3865

Will-o'-the-Wisp. You are the master of the house, I have no doubt,

And I'll accommodate myself to you with glee.

But do reflect! The mountain's magic-mad today,

And if a will-o'-the-wisp must show the way,

You must not take things all too seriously.

3870

Faust, Mephistopheles, Will-o'-the-Wisp [in alternating song].

Spheres of dream and necromancy,

We have entered them, we fancy.

Lead us well, for credit striving,

That we soon may be arriving

In the wide and desert spaces.

3875

I see trees there running races.

How each, quickly moving, passes,

And the cliffs that low are bowing,

And the rocks, long nose-like masses,

How they're snoring, how they're blowing!

3880

Over stones and grass are flowing

Brook and brooklet downward fleeting.

Hear I murmuring? Hear I singing?

Hear sweet plaints of love entreating,

Voices of those blest days ringing?

3885

What we're loving, hopeful yearning!
 And the echo, like returning
 Tales of olden times, resoundeth!
 Hoo-hoo! Shoo-hoo! Nearer soundeth
 Cry of owlet, jay, and plover! 3890
 Are they all awake remaining?
 Salamanders, through the cover,
 Long-limbed, fat-paunched, are they straining?
 And the roots, like serpents, winding
 Out of rock and sand, unbinding, 3895
 Stretch out fetters strange to scare us,
 To affright us and ensnare us.
 Living, sturdy gnarls uncanny
 Stretch out polypus-antennæ
 Toward the wanderer. Mice are teeming 3900
 In a thousand colours, streaming
 Through the moss and through the heather!
 And the glow-worms fly, in swarming
 Columns, ever forming
 A bewildering escort hither. 3905
 Tell me, do we stay or whether
 We are going onward thither?
 All, all seems to be gyrating,
 Rocks and trees that make grimaces,
 Lights that wander, changing places, 3910
 Multiplying, self-inflating.

Mephistopheles. Grab my mantle's hem, hold tightly!
 Here's a midway peak where nightly
 Man, astounded, sees and knows
 How in the mountain Mammon glows.¹ 3915

Faust. How strangely glimmers through the gorges,
 Like morning's red, a turbid glow!
 Down the abyss itself it forges,
 Cleaving its way through gulfs far, far below.
 Vapour floats yonder, there is steam up-leaping, 3920
 Here shines a glow through mist and haze,
 Then like a slender thread it's creeping,
 Then forth it breaks like fountain-sprays.
 Here for a long way it goes winding
 Along the vale in a hundred veins 3925
 And here—a corner crowding, binding—
 In sudden isolation wanes.
 There sparks are sprinkling like a shower
 Of widely scattered golden sand.
 And see the rocky walls! They tower, 3930
 They kindle and like ramparts stand.

¹Cf. Matthew, 6. 24.

Mephistopheles. Does not Sir Mammon splendidly

Light up the palace for his revelry?

You see all this! What luck you've had!

But hark! Now come the guests in tumult mad.

3935

Faust. How through the air the tempest raves!

It smites my neck, shock after shock!

Mephistopheles. You must lay hold on these old ribs of rock;

Else it will hurl you down to these abysses' graves.

A mist is making night more dark.

3940

How through the woods it crashes! Hark!

Scared away, the owls are flying.

Hearken! Columns split and quiver

In palaces of green undying.

The branches sigh and breaking shiver!

3945

The tree-trunks' mighty groaning!

The roots are creaking and moaning!

In frightfully entangled fall

They crash together, one and all,

And through the wreck-over-strewn abysses

3950

The tempest howls and hisses.

Voices over us! Do you hear?

Now far off and now more near?

All the mountain-side along

Streams a furious magic song!

3955

Witches [in Chorus].

The witches to the Brocken go;

The grain is green, the stubble aglow.

There gathers all the mighty host;

Sir Urian¹ sits uppermost,

So goes it over stone and stock;

3960

The witch breaks wind, and stinks the buck.

A Voice. Alone old Baubo's² coming now;

She's riding upon a farrow sow.

Chorus.

So honour to whom honour is due!

In front, Dame Baubo! Lead the crew!

3965

A sturdy sow with mother astride,

All witches follow in a tide.

A Voice. Which way did you come here?

A Voice.

The Ilsenstein³ way.

I peeped in the owl's nest there today.

She made great eyes at me!

¹The Devil.

²Baubo, a figure from classical mythology, symbolizes gross sensuality.

³A tall, clifflike rock a few miles from the Brocken.

THE FIRST PART

97

A Voice. Oh, fare on to Hell!

3970

Why ride so pell-mell?

A Voice. Just see how she's flayed me!

The wounds she has made me!

Witches [Chorus].

The way is broad, the way is long;

What is that mad and crazy throng?

3975

The broomstick pokes, the pitchfork thrusts,

The infant chokes, the mother busts.

Wizards [Half Chorus].

We steal along, like snails' our pace;

All women beat us in the race.

If toward Hell we set our pace,

3980

By a thousand steps they win the race.

Other Half.

Not so precisely do we take it,

In a thousand steps may woman make it;

Yet though she hastes as ever she can,

In a single leap it's done by man.

3985

A Voice [from above]. Come with us from the cliff-bound mere!

A Voice [from below]. We'd like to go with you up there.

We wash and we're scoured all bright and clean,

But sterile still as we've always been.

Both Choruses.

The wind is stilled, the stars take flight,

3990

The dismal moon fain hides its light;

In whiz and whirr the magic choir

By thousands sputters out sparks of fire.

A Voice [from below]. Halt there! Ho, there! Ho!

A Voice [from above]. Who calls out from the cleft below?

3995

A Voice [below]. Take me too! Take me too!

I'm climbing now three hundred years

And I can never reach the summit.

I want to be among my peers.

Both Choruses.

The broomstick bears, and bears the stock,

4000

The pitchfork bears, and bears the buck.

Who cannot lift himself today,

Is a lost man for aye and aye.

Half-Witch [below]. I've tripped behind so many a day,

And now the others are far away!

4005

I've no repose at home, and yet
Here too there's none for me to get.

Chorus of Witches.

Salve puts a heart in every hag,
Good as a sail is any rag;
A good ship every trough is too. 4010
You'll fly not 'less today you flew.

Both Choruses.

And when we glide the peak around,
Then sweep along upon the ground;
Bedeck both far and wide the heather
With all your witchdom's swarm together. 4015

They settle down.

Mephistopheles. They crowd and shove, they rush and clatter,
They hiss and whirl, they pull and chatter,
They sputter, stink and burn and flare!
A real witch-element, I swear!
Keep close or soon we'll be a parted pair. 4020
Where are you?

Faust [at a distance]. Here!

Mephistopheles. Already snatched up there?
Then I must exercise my rightful sway.
Make way! Squire Voland¹ comes! Make way, sweet folk, make way!
Here, Doctor, hold to me! and now in one quick rush
Let us get out of all this crush; 4025
It is too crazy even for the likes of me.
Hard by there something gleams with a quite peculiar glare;
A something draws me to that shrubbery.
Come, come! We'll go and slip in there.

Faust. Spirit of Contradiction! On! and lead the way! 4030
It was a very clever notion, I must say;
We seek the Brocken on Walpurgis Night,
Yet choose to isolate ourselves when near the height!

Mephistopheles. What motley flames! Just look along the heather!
There is a jolly club together. 4035
In little circles one is not alone.

Faust. I'd rather be up yonder, I must own.
Already whirling smoke and glow come into view.
A host is streaming to the Devil! See them ride!
Full many a riddle there must be untied. 4040

Mephistopheles. Yet many a riddle will be tied anew.
Just let the great world whiz and riot;
We'll house us meanwhile here in quiet.
We've known it as a fact of ancient date
That men make little worlds within the great. 4045

¹The Devil.

I see young witches stripped and naked over there
 And old ones wisely veiled, they don't go bare.
 For my sake be a friend to all;
 The fun is great, the trouble small.

I hear the sound of instruments arise! 4050
 Accursèd din! One must get used to that ado.
 Come! Come with me! It can't be otherwise.

I'll step up here; I'll introduce you too,
 And thus in debt to me bind you anew.
 That is no little space. What say you, friend? 4055
 Just look out there! You scarce can see the end.

A hundred fires are burning, tier on tier.
 They dance, they cook, they drink, make love, and chat.
 Now say, where's something better than all that?

Faust. In introducing us, will you appear 4060
 As devil or magician here?

Mephistopheles. True, I'm much used to go incognito,
 But on a gala day one lets one's orders show.
 No garter¹ have I to distinguish me,
 But here the horse's foot is honoured and in place. 4065
 You see that snail there? See her groping face!
 Already, creeping hither steadily,
 She's scented something out in me.

Though I should wish it, I cannot belie me here.
 But come! From fire to fire we'll make a tour, 4070
 I'll be the go-between and you the wooer.

To some who are sitting around dying embers.
 You agèd sirs, what are you doing in the rear?
 I'd praise you if right nicely in the midst I found you,
 With riot, youthful revelry around you.

At home there's solitude enough for everyone. 4075

General. What trust in nations can one place?
 However much for them one may have done.
 In peoples' as in women's grace
 Youth stands supreme over everyone.

Minister. Now all too far away from right are men, 4080
 I praise the good and old, and duly;
 When we were all-in-all, ah, truly,
 The real, real golden age was then.

Parvenu. We too weren't stupid, I'll be bound.
 Oft what we did, we shouldn't rightly; 4085
 But now the world turns round and round,
 And just when we would hold things tightly.

Author. Who now in any case will read
 A book with contents middling clever?
 And as for dear young folks, indeed, 4090
 They're pert and saucy now as never.

¹An allusion to the English Order of the Garter.

Mephistopheles [who all at once appears very old].

I feel that men are ripe for Judgment Day,
 Since no more up the witches' mount I'll climb;
 And since my cask drains turbidly away,
 So too the world declines in dregs and slime. 4095

Huckster-Witch. You gentlemen, don't pass by so!

Let such an opportunity not go!
 Look at my wares attentively;
 Here are all sorts of things to see.
 Yet in my shop, sirs, there is naught— 4100

Its like on earth you will not find—

That at some time or other has not wrought

Dire harm both to the world and to mankind.

No dagger's here which has not streamed with blood,

No cup which has not poured a hot, consuming flood 4105

Of poison into some quite healthy frame,

No gem that has not brought some lovely maid to shame,

Nor sword that has not made a truce miscarry

Or, from behind maybe, has stabbed no adversary.

Mephistopheles. Dear Coz, you understand but badly times like these:

What's done is past! What's past is done! 4110

Provide yourself with novelties!

By novelties alone can we be won.

Faust. If I'm not to forget myself, I must watch out!

That's what I call a fair beyond all doubt. 4115

Mephistopheles. Upward strives the whirling throng;

You think you shove, and you are shoved along.

Faust. Who can that be?

Mephistopheles. Observe her with great care!

That's Lilith.

Faust. Who?

Mephistopheles. Adam's first wife.¹ Beware

That lovely hair of hers, those tresses 4120

Which she incomparably delights to wear!

The young man whom she lures into their snare

She will not soon release from her caresses.

Faust. Yonder sit two, one old and one young thing.

They have already done some right good capering. 4125

¹Jewish tradition ascribes to Adam a first wife named Lilith. After the creation of Eve, Lilith is said to have become the mistress of a devil, seducing men and pursuing children. She has been identified with the "female" of Gen. 1. 27, and with the "screech owl" (or "night monster") of Isaiah, 34. 14. (Gen. 1. 27: So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. Isaiah, 34. 14: the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest.) Lilith is an embodiment of sensuality, a culmination of Walpurgis Night, of that phase of the Eternal-Womanly which degrades, the extremest opposite of the all-understanding, all-forgiving Virgin at the end of the play.

German folk-lore ascribed especial power to witches' hair; in the trials of witches therefore their hair was shorn before the proceedings started.

Mephistopheles. There is no rest today for young or old.

A new dance starts; come now! let us take hold!

Faust [*dancing with THE YOUNG WITCH*].

Once came a lovely dream to me.

I saw therein an apple tree;

Two lovely apples on it shone,

They charmed me so, I climbed thereon.

4130

The Beauty.

The little apples man entice

Since first they were in Paradise.

I feel myself with pleasure glow

That such within my garden grow.

4135

Mephistopheles [*with THE OLD WITCH*].

Once came a wanton dream to me.

I saw therein a riven tree;

It had a monstrous hole;

'Twas huge, yet I was pleased with it.

The Old Witch.

I proffer now my best salute

To you, the knight with horse's foot!

Let me a proper cork prepare,

If him a big hole does not scare.

4140

*Proctophantasmist.*¹ Accursèd folk! how dare you then?

Have you not long had proof complete,

A spirit never stands on ordinary feet?

And now you're dancing like us other men!

The Beauty [*dancing*]. Why is he at our ball? that fellow there?

Faust [*dancing*]. Ha! He is simply everywhere.

He must appraise what others dance.

If over each step he can't make a din,

The step's as good as if it had not been.

It irks him most the moment we advance.

If you'd but turn around in endless repetition

As he is wont to do in his old mill,

That, to be sure, he'd call not ill,

Especially if you asked his permission.

4145

4150

4155

Proctophantasmist. You are still here! This is unheard-of, on my word!

¹The proctophantasmist (rump-visionary) is Friedrich Nicolai, who toward the end of the eighteenth century made himself ridiculous in advocating dry common-sense in literature and in opposing new ideas. He had angered Goethe first by writing a parody of *The Sorrows of Young Werther*; later he attacked Goethe's friend Schiller. Nicolai then committed an indiscretion. The rumour had gone about in Berlin in 1797 that ghosts had appeared in the suburb of Tegel, whereupon Nicolai prepared a paper that he read before the Berlin Academy of Sciences in which he announced that he had been plagued by ghostly apparitions and had cured himself by applying leeches to his rump. Goethe now seized an opportunity to even up the score with Nicolai.

- Vanish! We brought enlightenment as you have heard!
 This devilish crew cares not for rules or books. 4160
 We are so wise, and yet in Tegel there are spooks!
 How long I've swept and swept at this conceit absurd
 And can't sweep clean—this is unheard-of, on my word!
The Beauty. Then do stop boring us in such a place!
Proctophantasmist. I say it, Spirits, to your face, 4165
 This spirit despotism I will not endure;
 My spirit can not act that way.
The dancing goes on.
 I see that I have no success today;
 But anyway I'll take along "A Tour"¹
 And hope still, ere my last step, to subdue 4170
 The devils and the poets too.
Mephistopheles. He'll straightway in a puddle set him.
 That's how he gets relief, of solace well assured.
 When leeches, feasting on his rump, beset him,
 Of spirits and of spirit he is cured. 4175
To FAUST who has left the dance.
 Why do you let the pretty maiden go
 Who sang so sweetly as you danced along?
Faust. Ugh! in the very middle of her song
 A mouse sprang from her lips—'twas small and red.
Mephistopheles. That's quite all right. There's naught in that to 4180
 dread.
 It is enough you did not find the mouse was grey.
 Who in a lover's hour will bother anyway?
Faust. I saw then—
Mephistopheles. What?
Faust. Mephisto, see you there—
 Far off she stands, alone—a girl so pale and fair?
 She drags herself but slowly from that place. 4185
 She seems to move with shackled feet.
 I must confess, I thought it was the face—
 That she looks like my Gretchen sweet.
Mephistopheles. Do let that be! That is of good to none.
 It is a magic image, lifeless eidolon. 4190
 It is not well to meet that anywhere;
 Man's blood grows frigid from that rigid stare;
 And he is turned almost to stone.
 The story of Medusa you of course have known.
Faust. In truth, the eyes of one who's dead are those, 4195
 Which there was no fond, loving hand to close;
 That is the breast that Gretchen offered me,
 That is the body sweet that I enjoyed.
Mephistopheles. It's sorcery, you fool, you're easily decoyed!
 She seems to each as though his love were she. 4200

¹Nicolai's *Description of a Tour through Germany and Switzerland*, in twelve volumes.

Faust. What rapture! Ah, what misery!

Yet from this vision I can't turn aside.

How strange that such a lovely neck

A single band of crimson must bedeck!

A knife's edge scarcely seems less wide.

4205

Mephistopheles. Quite right! I see it likewise, it is true!

And she can bear her head twixt side and elbow too,

For Perseus struck it off for her—

I vow, illusion's still bewitching you!

Do come on up the little height!

4210

The Prater¹ is not livelier;

And if someone has not bewitched me quite,

I truly see a theatre.

What's going on?

Servibilis. They're starting now. The play

Will be the last of seven, one that's new;

4215

To give so many is the usual way.

A dilettante wrote the play

And dilettanti will enact it too.

Excuse me, gentlemen, if I must disappear;

With dilettant delight I raise the curtain.

4220

Mephistopheles. I find that all is well, to find you here;

Your proper place is on the Brocken, that is certain.

WALPURGIS NIGHT'S DREAM

OR, OBERON AND TITANIA'S GOLDEN WEDDING

INTERMEZZO

Theatre Manager.

Now for once we'll rest today,

Valiant sons of Mieding.²

Misty vale and mountain grey

4225

Are all the scene we're needing!

Herald.

Golden wedding cannot be

Till fifty years have vanished;

And yet golden is 't to me

When the strife is banished.

4230

Oberon.

Are ye spirits to be seen,

Come forth and show it duly!

Fairy king and fairy queen,

They are united newly.

¹A park in Vienna.

²Mieding was Goethe's right-hand man in the presentation of plays in Weimar until Mieding's death in 1782.

Puck.

Now comes Puck and whirls about 4235
 And slides his foot a-dancing;
 After come a hundred out,
 Themselves and him entrancing.

Ariel.

Ariel awakes the song
 With pure and heavenly measure; 4240
 Many frights he lures along,
 And fair ones too, with pleasure.

Oberon.

Spouses who would live in peace,
 Learn from our example!
 When a pair would love increase, 4245
 To separate them's ample.

Titania.

Sulks the husband, carps the wife,
 Just seize them quickly, harry
 Her away far to the south
 And him to far north carry. 4250

Orchestra Tutti [fortissimo].

Snout of fly, mosquito-bill,
 With kin of all conditions,
 Frog in leaves and crickets shrill,
 These are the musicians!

Solo.

Sec, here comes the bagpipe's sack!
 Soapbubble-like, it's blowing.
 Hear the snecke-snicke-snack
 Through its snub nose flowing! 4255

A Spirit that is just taking form.

Spider's foot and paunch of toad
 And wings the wight doth grow him!
 True, a beastie 'twill not be 4260
 But yet a little poem.

A Little Couple.

Short step here and high leap there
 Through honey-dew and sweetness;
 Yet you'll soar not through the air, 4265
 With all your tripping fleetness.

Inquisitive Traveller.

Is that not mummers' mocking play?
 Shall I trust to my vision?
 Fair god Oberon today
 Is here on exhibition? 4270

*Orthodox.*¹

Claws or tail I do not see
 And yet, beyond a cavil,
 Just like "The Gods of Greece" is he
 Likewise a very devil.

Northern Artist.

What I may grasp today may be
 But sketches of this tourney,
 Yet I'm betimes preparing me
 For my Italian Journey. 4275

Purist.

Woe! bad luck has led me here.
 How decency they're mocking!
 Of all the witches' host, dear! dear!
 But two are powdered! Shocking! 4280

Young Witch.

Powder is like a petticoat,
 For grey hags hoddly-doddy;
 So I sit naked on my goat
 And show a strapping body. 4285

Matron.

We are too well-behaved by far,
 With you to snarl a lot here;
 Yet, young and tender as you are,
 I hope that you will rot here. 4290

Leader of the Orchestra.

Snout of fly, mosquito-bill,
 Don't swarm around the naked!
 Frog in leaves and cricket shrill,
 Do mark the time and take it!

Weather-Vane [turning in one direction].

The comp'ny's all one can wish for,
 Each one a bride, I swear it!
 And man by man a bachelor,
 Most prom'sing, I declare it! 4295

Weather-Vane [turning in the other direction].

And will the ground not open out
 To swallow all who're dancing,
 Then I will swiftly leave this rout
 And straight to Hell go prancing. 4300

*Xenia.*²

See us here as insects! Ha!
 Each one with sharp shears on her,

¹Count Ferdinand Leopold von Stolberg, who accused Schiller of blasphemy when Schiller wrote his poem, *The Gods of Greece*.

²Goethe and Schiller wrote many *Xenia*.

That Lord Satan, our papa,
We fittingly may honour. 4305

Hennings.¹

Just see them all, a crowding throng,
Naïvely jesting, playing!
That they had kind hearts all along,
They'll in the end be saying. 4310

"Leader of the Muses."

Amid this witches' host, indeed,
One's way one gladly loses;
For, sure, I could these sooner lead
Than I can lead the Muses.

The Quondam "Spirit of the Times."

With proper folk one can all do. 4315
Come, cling close, none can pass us!
The Blocksberg has a broad top too,
Like Germany's Parnassus.

Inquisitive Traveller.

What's the name of that stiff man?
He goes with haughty paces;
He snuffles all he snuffle can. 4320
"He scents the Jesuits' traces."

Crane.

If water clear or muddy be,
I fish with pleasure, really;
That's why this pious man you see 4325
With devils mixing freely.

Worldling.²

By pious people, I speak true,
No vehicle's rejected;
Conventicles, more than a few,
On Blocksberg are erected. 4330

Dancer.

Another chorus now succeeds!
I hear a distant drumming.
"Don't be disturbed! It's, in the reeds,
The herons' changeless booming."

Dancing Master.

How each his legs kicks up and flings! 4335
Somehow gets on, however!
The clumsy hops, the crooked springs,
And how it looks, ask never!

¹August von Hennings, who had published a book of poems called *Leader of the Muses* and edited a journal called *Spirit of the Times* (later *Spirit of the Nineteenth Century*, hence "Quondam"), had attacked the Xenia.

²Goethe himself.

THE FIRST PART

107

Fiddler.

They hate each other well, that crew,
And they would like to rend them.
As Orpheus' lyre the beasts all drew,
The bagpipe here will blend them.

4340

Dogmatist.

I'll not let screams lead me to war
With doubts and critic-cavils.
The Devil must be something, or
Else how could there be devils?

4345

Idealist.

For once, as I see phantasy,
It is far too despotic.
In truth, if I be all I see,
Today I'm idiotic.

4350

Realist.

This riot makes my torture sheer
And greatly irks me surely;
For the first time I'm standing here
On my feet insecurely.

Supernaturalist.

With much delight I join this crew
And share with them their revels;
For that there are good spirits too
I argue from these devils.

4355

Skeptic.

They go to track the flamelets out
And think they're near the treasure.
Devil alliterates with Doubt,
So I am here with pleasure.

4360

Leader of the Orchestra.

Frog in leaves and cricket shrill,
Cursed dilettants! Perdition!
Fly-snout and mosquito-bill,
You're each a fine musician!

4365

The Adroit.

Sans-souci, we call us so,
Gay creatures free from worry;
We afoot no more can go,
So on our heads we hurry.

4370

The Ne'er-Do-Wells.

We once sponged many a bite, 'tis true,
God help us! That is done now!
We've danced our shoes entirely through,
On naked soles we run now.

Will-o'-the-Wisps.

From the marshes we come out,
Where we arose from litter;
Yet here in dancing roundabout
We're gallants all a-glitter. 4375

A Falling Star.

From the heights above plunged I,
With star- and fire-light o'er me;
Crookèd now in grass I lie,
Who'll to my feet restore me? 4380

The Heavy Ones.

Room! more room! All round us tool
Thus downward go the grasses.
Spirits come and they, it's true,
Are clumsy, heavy masses. 4385

Puck.

Bloated, enter not the fray,
Like elephant-calves about one!
And the clumsiest today
Be Puck himself, the stout one! 4390

Ariel.

If kind Nature gave you wings,
If them Mind uncloses,
Follow my light wanderings
To yon hill of roses!

Orchestra [pianissimo].

Cloud and mist drift off with speed,
Aloft 'tis brighter growing.
Breeze in leaves and wind in reed,
And all away is blowing. 4395

A DISMAL DAY. A FIELD.

FAUST. MEPHISTOPHELES.

Faust. In misery! Despairing! Long pitiaibly astray upon the earth and now imprisoned! That lovely, ill-starred creature locked up in a prison as a criminal, to suffer horrible tortures. To that has it come! to that!—Treacherous, contemptible spirit, and that you have concealed from me! —Stay, then, stay! Roll your devilish eyes ragingly in your head! Stay and defy me with your intolerable presence! Imprisoned! In irreparable misery! Delivered up to evil spirits and to condemning, feelingless mankind! And me, meanwhile, you cradle in insipid diversions, hide from me her increasing wretchedness, and let her, helpless, go to ruin!

Mephistopheles. She's not the first one.

Faust. Dog! Detestable monster! Turn him, Thou Spirit Infinite, turn the worm back into his dog's-form, as at night it often pleased him to trot along before me, to roll in a heap before the feet of the innocent wanderer, and as he fell, to spring upon his shoulders. Turn him back into

his favourite form, that he may crawl on his belly, before me in the sand, that I may trample him beneath my feet, the outcast!—Not the first one!—Woe! Woe! that no human soul can grasp it, that more than one creature has sunk down into the depths of this misery, that the first one, in writhing, deathly agony, did not atone for the guilt of all the others in the sight of the Eternal Pardoner! The misery of this single one pierces the marrow of my life; and you are calmly grinning at the fate of thousands!

Mephistopheles. Now we are again at our wits' end, there where the reason of you mortals snaps from over-stretching. Why do you enter into fellowship with us if you can not carry it through? Will you fly and are not safe from dizziness? Did we force ourselves on you, or you on us?

Faust. Bare not so your greedy fangs at me! It fills me with loathing! Great, glorious Spirit, Thou who didst deign to appear to me, Thou who knowest my heart and my soul, why fetter me to the infamous comrade who feeds on mischief and slakes his thirst in destruction?

Mephistopheles. Have you ended?

Faust. Save her! or woe to you! The most hideous curses be on you for thousands of years!

Mephistopheles. I can not loose the bonds of the avenger, nor undo his bolts. Save her! Who was it that plunged her into ruin? I or you?

FAUST looks around wildly.

Mephistopheles. Will you reach for the thunder? 'Tis well that it was not given to you miserable mortals! To smash to pieces the man who blamelessly answers back, that is the tyrant's way of venting himself when embarrassed.

Faust. Take me to her! She shall be free!

Mephistopheles. And the danger to which you will expose yourself? Know that the guilt of blood, from your hand, still lies upon the town. Over the spot where a man was slain, avenging spirits hover and lie in wait for the returning murderer.

Faust. That too from you? The murder and death of a world be upon you, monster! Lead me to her, I say, and set her free!

Mephistopheles. I will lead you, and what I can do, hear! Have I all power in Heaven and on earth? The warder's senses I will becloud; make yourself master of the keys and lead her forth with human hand. I'll watch! The magic horses are ready, I will carry you away. That I can do.

Faust. Up and away!

NIGHT. AN OPEN FIELD.

FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES storming along on black horses.

Faust. What weaving are they round the Ravenstone?

Mephistopheles. I know not what they are brewing and doing. 4400

Faust. Hovering up, hovering down, bending low, bowing down.

Mephistopheles. A witches' guild.

Faust. They strew and dedicate.

Mephistopheles. On! On!

A PRISON

Faust [with a bunch of keys and a lamp, in front of an iron wicket].

A long-unwonted shudder over me falls, 4405

The woe of human lot lays hold on me.

Here then she dwells, within these humid walls,

And all her crime was a fond fantasy.

You hesitate to go to her? You fear

Again to see her near? 4410

On! Your faltering brings death lingering herel

He grasps the lock.

Someone is singing [inside].

My mother, the whore,

She has murdered me!

My father, the rogue,

He has eaten me, 4415

My sister, so small,

My bones, one and all,

In a cool place did lay.

A forest bird fair I became that day;

Fly away! Fly away! 4420

Faust [unlocking the wicket].

She does not dream her lover listens, near again,

And hears the rustling straw, the clanking chain.

He steps in.

Margaret [hiding herself on her pallet].

Woe! Woe! They come! How bitter 'tis to die!

Faust [softly]. Hush! Hush! I come to set you free!

Margaret [grovelling at his feet].

If you're a man, then feel my misery! 4425

Faust. You will wake the warders with your cry!

He takes hold of the chains, to unlock them.

Margaret [on her knees]. Who, headsman, ever had this power

Over me to give?

You fetch me at the midnight hour!

Be merciful and let me live! 4430

Will it not be soon enough when the matin's rung?

She stands up.

Ah! I am still so young, so young!

And now to die!

It was my ruin that so fair was I.

My love was near, now he is far; 4435

Torn lies the wreath, scattered the flowers are.

Seize me not thus so violently!

What have I done to you? Oh, pity me!

Let me not in vain implore!

I've never, my life long, seen you before! 4440

Faust. Can I survive this misery?

Margaret. You now have power over me.

Let me but nurse my baby once again.

I fondled it the livelong night;

They took it from me, just to give me pain,

And now they say I murdered it outright.

4445

I never shall again be glad.

They're singing songs about me! That is bad

Of people! An old story ends just so.

Who bids them tell it of me, though?

4450

Faust [*throws himself down*].

Here at your feet a lover lies,

To loose the bondage of these miseries.

Margaret [*throws herself beside him*].

Oh, let us kneel, call on the saints to hear us!

See! under these steps near us

And the threshold's swell,

4455

Seething all Hell!

The Devil,

In fearful brawling,

Holds awful revell!

Faust [*loudly*]. Gretchen! Gretchen!

4460

Margaret [*listening attentively*].

That was my lover calling!

She springs up. The chains fall off.

Where is he? I heard him calling! I am free!

No one shall hinder me.

To his neck will I fly,

On his bosom lie!

4465

He called "Gretchen!" He stood at the door of my cell.

Through the midst of the howl and clatter of Hell,

Through the anger and scorn of the devilish crew,

The tones of that sweet, loving voice I knew.

Faust. It's I!

Margaret. It's you! Oh, say it once again!

4470

Embracing him.

It's he! It's he! Where's all my misery?

And where the anguish of the gaol? the chain?

It's you! You've come to save me!

And I am saved!

The very street is here anew

4475

Where for the first time I saw you,

And the cheerful garden too

Where I and Martha wait for you.

Faust [*urging her to go*]. Come! Come with me!

Margaret.

Oh, tarry!

So gladly do I tarry where you tarry!

4480

Caressing him.

Faust. Hurry!

Unless you hurry,

We must pay for it dearly.

Margaret. What? And can you kiss no more! Is this

My love, away from me a short while merely,

4485

And yet forgotten how to kiss?

Why do I cling about your neck so fearfully?

When once but at a glance, a word, from you,

All Heaven swept me through and through,

And you kissed me as if you'd smother me.

4490

Kiss me! Do!

Or I'll kiss you!

She embraces him.

Oh, woe! Your dear lips are so cold,

Are still!

Where has your loving

4495

Been roving?

Who did me this ill?

She turns away from him.

Faust. Come! follow me, love, have courage, be bold!

I'll press you to my heart with warmth a thousandfold;

I only beg you now to follow me!

4500

Margaret [turning toward him].

And is it you, then? You, quite certainly?

Faust. It's I! Come with me!

Margaret. You unlock the chain,

You take me in your lap again!

How is it that you do not shrink from me?

And do you know, my love, whom you set free?

4505

Faust. Come! come! The depths of night already wane.

Margaret. My mother I have slain.

My child I've drowned! It's true!

Was it not given to me and you?

To you as well! It's you! I scarce can deem

4510

It real. Give me your hand! It is no dream!

Your darling hand! But ah, it's wet!

Quick wipe it off! It seems that even yet

I see blood run.

Ah, God! What have you done?

4515

Oh, put away

The sword, I pray!

Faust. Let what is done and over, over be!

You're killing me.

Margaret. No, you must stay alive, you must indeed!

4520

I'll tell you how the graves must be.

For them you must take heed

Tomorrow morn for me.

The best place give to my mother,

And close beside her my brother,

4525

Me a little to one side,

A space—but not too wide!

And put the little one here on my right breast.

No one else will lie beside me!

Ah, in your arms to nestle and hide me,

4530

That was a sweet, a lovely bliss!

But now, much as I try, it seems to go amiss.

It seems to me as if I must

Force myself on you and you thrust

Me back, and yet it's you, so kind, so good to see.

4535

Faust. If you feel it is I, then come with me!

Margaret. Out there?

Faust. To freedom!

Margaret. If the grave's out there,

Death lurking near, then come with me!

From here to the eternal bed of rest

4540

And no step further—No!

You go away now? Henry! Oh, that I could go!

Faust. You can! Just will it! Open stands the door.

Margaret. I dare not go; for me there's no hope any more.

Why flee? They'll surely lie in wait for me.

4545

It is so wretched to beg one's way

And with an evil conscience too.

It is so wretched, in unknown parts to stray,

And they will seize me anyway.

Faust. I shall remain with you.

4550

Margaret. Quick! Quick! Begone!

Save your poor child! On! On!

Keep to the way

Along the brook,

Over the bridge

4555

To the wood beyond,

To the left where the plank is

In the pond.

Quick! Seize it! Quick!

It's trying to rise,

4560

It's struggling still!

Save it! Save it!

Faust. Collect your thoughts! And see,

It's but one step, then you are free!

Margaret. If we were only past the hill!

4565

There sits my mother upon a stone,

My brain is seized by cold, cold dread!

There sits my mother upon a stone,

And to and fro she wags her head;

She becks not, she nods not, her head's drooping lower,

4570

She has slept long, she'll wake no more.

She slept and then we were so glad.

Those were happy times we had.

Faust. No prayers help here and naught I say,
So I must venture to bear you away. 4575

Margaret. Let me alone! No, I'll not suffer force!

Don't pounce so murderously on me!

I have done all for love of you.

Faust. My darling! See!

The day is dawning! Darling!

Margaret. Day! Yes, day is dawning! The last day breaks for me! 4580

My wedding-day this was to be!

Tell no one you have been with Gretchen.

My wreath's gone forever!

It is gone and in vain.

We'll see one another again, 4585

But at dances never.

The crowd comes surging, no sound it makes,

The street and square

Cannot hold all there.

The death-bell tolls, the white wand breaks. 4590

How they seize me, bind me with lashes!

Away and to the block I'm sped.

Each neck is wincing at the flashes

As swift the keen blade flashes over my head.

Hushed lies the world as the grave. 4595

Faust. Oh! had I never been born!

Mephistopheles [*appears outside*]. Off! or you're lost and lorn.

What vain delaying, wavering, prating!

My shivering steeds are waiting,

The morning twilight's near. 4600

Margaret. What rises up from the threshold here?

He! He! Thrust him out!

In this holy place what is he about?

He seeks me!

Faust. You shall live!

Margaret. Judgment of God! My all to thee I give! 4605

Mephistopheles [*to FAUST*].

Come! Come! Along with her I will abandon you.

Margaret. Thine am I, Father! Rescue me!

Ye angels! Ye heavenly hosts! Appear,

Encamp about and guard me here!

Henry! I shrink from you! 4610

Mephistopheles. She is judged!

A Voice [*from above*]. She is saved!

Mephistopheles [*to FAUST*]. Here to me!

He disappears with FAUST.

A Voice [*from within, dying away*]. Henry! Henry!

The Second Part OF THE TRAGEDY



ACT I

A PLEASING LANDSCAPE

TWILIGHT

FAUST, *reclining on flowery turf, weary, restless, trying to sleep.*

SPIRITS, *charming little figures forming a circle, hovering about.*

Ariel [song accompanied by Aeolian harps].

When in spring the rain of flowers
Hovering sinketh over all,
When the meadows, bright with showers, 4615
Unto all the earth-born call,
Tiny elves with souls propitious
Haste to help where help they can;
Be he blameless, be he vicious,
They lament the luckless man. 4620

Hovering around this head in circles airy,
Look that ye show the noble law of fairy:
Appase the furious conflict in his heart!
Draw out the burning arrows of remorse,
From suffered horrors cleanse his inmost part! 4625
Four pauses makes the night upon its course:
Hasten to fill them with your kindly art!
His head upon a cooling pillow lay,
Then bathe him in the dew from Lethe's stream!
His limbs, cramp-stiffened, soon will freely play 4630
When rest has made him strong for morn's new beam.
Perform the fairest elfin rite,
Restore him to the holy light!

Chorus [singly, or two or more, alternating and together].

When the breezes, warmth exhaling,
Fill the green-encircled plain, 4635
Twilight sinks its mists enveiling,
Brings sweet fragrance in its train,
Softly whispers peace to mortals,
Rocks the heart to childlike rest,
Closes eyelids, daylight's portals, 4640

Of the weary and oppressed.
 Night already sinks and darkles,
 Holy follows star on star,
 Light now bright, now fainter sparkles,
 Glitters near and gleams afar, 4645
 Glitters, in the lake reflecting,
 Gleams in night's clear canopy;
 Deepest slumber's bliss perfecting,
 Reigns the moon's full majesty.

Now the hours are passed and over, 4650
 Pain and bliss have fled away.
 Feel it now! Thou wilt recover!
 Trust the gleam of new-born day!
 Vales grow green and hills are swelling,
 Lure to bowers of rest again; 4655
 Harvest's coming now foretelling,
 Roll the silvery waves of grain.

If thou every wish wouldst gain thee,
 Gaze at yonder glory wide!
 Lightly do the bonds restrain thee; 4660
 Sleep's a shell, cast it aside!
 Be the crowd faint-hearted, quailing,
 Falter not, but be thou bold!
 All is his who never-failing
 Understands and swift lays hold. 4665

A tremendous tumult announces the approach of the sun.

Ariel. Hark! The storm of hours is nearing!
 Sounding loud to spirit-hearing,
 Is the new-born day appearing.
 Rocky portals grate and shatter,
 Phocbus' wheels roll forth and clatter. 4670
 What a tumult Light brings near!
 Trumpets, trombones are resounding,
 Eyes are blinking, cars astounding;
 The unheard ye shall not hear.
 Slip into a flowery bell 4675
 Deeper, deeper; quiet dwell
 Under the leaf, in the cliff,
 If it strikes you, ye are deaf.

Faust. Refreshed anew life's pulses beat and waken
 To greet the mild ethereal dawn of morning; 4680
 Earth, through this night thou too hast stood unshaken
 And breath'st before me in thy new adorning,
 Beginst to wrap me round with gladness thrilling,
 A vigorous resolve in me forewarning,
 Unceasing strife for life supreme instilling.— 4685
 Now lies the world revealed in twilight glimmer,
 The wood resounds, a thousand voices trilling;

The vales where mist flows in and out lie dimmer,
 But in the gorges sinks a light from heaven,
 And boughs and twigs, refreshed, lift up their shimmer
 From fragrant chasms where they slept at even;
 Tint upon tint again emerges, clearing
 Where trembling pearls from flower and leaf drip riven:
 All round me is a Paradise appearing.

4690

Look up!—The peaks, gigantic and supernal,
 Proclaim the hour most solemn now is nearing.
 They early may enjoy the light eternal
 That later to us here below is wended.

4695

Now on the alpine meadows, sloping, vernal,
 A clear and lavish glory has descended
 And step by step fulfils its journey's ending.
 The sun steps forth!—Alas, already blinded,
 I turn away, the pain my vision rending.

4700

Thus is it ever when a hope long yearning
 Has made a wish its own, supreme, transcending,
 And finds Fulfilment's portals outward turning;
 From those eternal deeps bursts ever higher
 Too great a flame, we stand, with wonder burning.
 To kindle life's fair torch we did aspire
 And seas of flame—and what a flame!—embrace us!
 Is it Love? Is it Hate? that twine us with their fire,
 In alternating joy and pain enlace us,
 So that again toward earth we turn our gazing,
 Baffled, to hide in youth's fond veils our faces.

4705

4710

Behind me therefore let the sun be blazing!
 The cataract in gorges deeply riven
 I view with rapture growing and amazing.
 To plunge on plunge in a thousand streams it's given,
 And yet a thousand, downward to the valleys,
 While foam and mist high in the air are driven.
 Yet how superb above this tumult sallies
 The many-coloured rainbow's changeful being;
 Now lost in air, now clearly drawn, it dallies,
 Shedding sweet coolness round us even when fleeing!
 The rainbow mirrors human aims and action.
 Think, and more clearly wilt thou grasp it, seeing
 Life is but light in many-hued reflection.

4715

4720

4725

THE EMPEROR'S PALACE

THE THRONE-ROOM

The State Council awaiting the EMPEROR. Trumpets. Courtiers of all kinds enter, splendidly dressed. The EMPEROR ascends the throne, at his right hand the ASTROLOGER.

Emperor. I greet you, faithful friends and dear,

Assembled here from far and wide.

I see the wise man at my side,

4730

But wherefore is the Fool not here?

A Squire. A pace behind your mantle's sweep

There on the stairs he fell in a heap;

They bore away that load of fat,

But dead or drunk? No one knows that.

4735

A Second Squire. Now at a swift, amazing pace

Another's pushing to his place.

He's quaintly primped, in truth, and smart,

But such a fright that all men start.

The guards there at the doorway hold

4740

Their halberds crosswise and athwart—

But here he is. The Fool is bold!

Mephistopheles [kneeling before the throne].

What is accursed and welcomed ever?

What's longed for, ever chased away?

What's always taken into favour?

4745

What's harshly blamed, accused each day?

Whom don't you dare to summon here?

Whose name hears gladly every man?

What to your throne is drawing near?

What's placed itself beneath your ban?

4750

Emperor. Your words you may at present spare!

The place for riddles is not here;

They are these gentlemen's affair.

Solve them yourself! I'd like to hear.

My old fool's gone far, far away, I fear me;

4755

Take you his place and come and stand here near me.

MEPHISTOPHELES mounts the steps and stations himself on the left.

Murmurs of the Crowd.

A brand-new fool—new pains begin—

Whence did he come?—how came he in?—

The old one fell—he's spent and done—

A barrel he—a lath this one—

4760

Emperor. And so, ye faithful whom I love,

Be welcome here from near and far.

Ye meet beneath a favouring star;

Fortune is written for us there above.

Yet wherefore in these days, oh, say,

4765

When all our cares we'd thrust away

And wear the mummer's mask in play

And gaiety alone enjoy,

Why should we let state councils us annoy?

But since the task seems one we may not shun,

4770

All is arranged, so be it done.

Chancellor. The highest virtue like an aureole

Circles the Emperor's head; alone and sole,

He validly can exercise it:

'Tis justice!—All men love and prize it;

4775

'Tis what all wish, scarce do without, and ask;

To grant it to his people is his task.

But ah! what good to mortal mind is sense,

What good to hearts is kindness, hands benevolence,

When through the state a fever runs and revels,

4780

And evil hatches more and more of evils?

Who views the wide realm from this height supreme,

To him all seems like an oppressive dream,

Where in confusion is confusion reigning

And lawlessness by law itself maintaining,

4785

A world of error evermore obtaining.

This man steals herds, a woman that,

Cross, chalice, candlestick from altar;

For many years his boastings never falter,

His skin intact, his body sound and fat.

4790

Now plaintiffs crowd into the hall,

The judge, encushioned, lords it over all.

Meanwhile in billows, angry, urging,

A growing tumult of revolt is surging.

Great crimes and shame may be the braggart's token,

4795

On worst accomplices he oft depends;

And "Guilty!" is the verdict often spoken

Where Innocence only itself defends.

To pieces is our world now going,

What's fitting loses all its might;

4800

How ever shall that sense be growing

Which, only, leads us to the Right?

At last will men of good intent

To briber, flatterer incline;

A judge who can impose no punishment,

4805

At last with culprits will combine.

I've painted black, and yet a denser screen

I'd rather draw before the scene.

Pause.

Decisions cannot be evaded;

When all do harm and none are aided,

4810

Majesty too becomes a prey.

Commander-in-Chief. In these wild days what riots quicken!

Each strikes and he in turn is stricken,

And no command will men obey.

The citizen behind his wall,

4815

The knight upon his rocky nest,

Have sworn to last us out, and all

Maintain their power with stubborn zest.

The mercenaries, restless growing,

Blusteringly demand their pay,

4820

And if to them no more were owing,
 They would be quick to run away.
 Let one forbid what all men fain expect,
 He's put his hand into a hornet's nest;
 The empire which they should protect 4825
 Lies plundered, desolate, and waste.
 This furious riot no one is restraining,
 Already half the world's undone;
 Outside the realm kings still are reigning,
 But no one thinks it his concern—not one. 4830

Treasurer. Who will depend upon allies!
 The funds they pledged as subsidies,
 Like leaking pipe-borne water, do not flow.
 Then, Sire, of these wide states—yours by succession—
 Who now has come into possession? 4835
 A new lord rules wherever one may go,
 Insist on living independently;
 How he keeps house, we must look on and see.
 Of rights we've given up so many,
 We're left without a claim to any. 4840
 And as to parties, of whatever name,
 There's been no trust in them of late;
 They may give praise or they may blame,
 Indifferent are their love and hate.
 To rest them well from all their labour 4845
 Lie hidden Ghibelline and Guelph.
 Who is there now who'll help his neighbour?
 Each has enough to help himself.
 Barred are the gates where gold is stored,
 And all men scratch and scrape and hoard, 4850
 And empty all our coffers stay.

Steward. What ills I too must learn to bear!
 We want each day to save and spare,
 And more we're needing every day,
 And daily do I see new trouble growing. 4855
 The cooks lack nothing, they've no woes;
 For boars and stags and hares and roes
 And fowls, geese, ducks, and turkeys too,
 Allowances-in-kind, sure revenue,
 They still are not so badly flowing. 4860
 The flow of wine? That, to be sure, is slowing.
 Where once in cellars cask on cask was nuzzling,
 The best of brands and vintages befuzzling,
 Our noble lords' eternal guzzling
 Is draining every last drop out. 4865
 The City Council's store must now be opened up.
 A basin, bowl, is seized as drinking-cup
 And under the table ends the drinking-bout.

Now I'm to pay, give each his wages.

The Jew will spare me no outrages,

He'll make advances which for ages

Will put our revenues to rout.

The swine are no more fatten fed,

Pawned is the pillow on the bed,

At table we eat bread for which we owe.

4870

4875

Emperor [after some reflection, to MEPHISTOPHELES].

Say, Fool, can you not add a tale of woe?

Mephistopheles. Indeed, not I! I see this ambient splendour,

Yourself and yours!—Should one his trust surrender

Where Majesty holds undisputed sway

And ready might sweeps hostile force away?

Where honest purpose holds command

And wisdom guides the active hand?

What can the powers of evil do, combining

To make a darkness where such stars are shining?

4880

Murmurs.

That is a rogue—full well he knows—

Sneaks in by lying—while it goes—

I know for sure—what lurks behind—

What then?—he has some scheme in mind—

4885

Mephistopheles. Where in this world does not some lack appear?

Here this, there that, but money's lacking here.

One can not pick it off the floor, that's sure,

But what lies deepest, wisdom can procure.

In veins of mountains, walls far underground,

Gold coined and uncoined can be found;

And do you ask me who'll bring it to light?

A man endowed with Mind's and Nature's might!

4890

4895

Chancellor. Nature and Mind—don't talk to Christians thus!

Men burn up atheists, fittingly,

Because such speeches are most dangerous.

Nature is sin, and Mind is devil,

They nurture doubt, in doubt they revel,

Their hybrid, monstrous progeny.

That's not for us!—Our Emperor's ancient land

Has seen arise two castes alone

Who worthily uphold his throne:

The saints and knights. Firm do they stand,

Defying every tempest day by day

And taking church and state in pay.

In rabble minds that breed confusion

Revolt arises like a tide.

Heretics, wizards! Imps of delusion!

They ruin town and country-side.

Them will you now with brazen juggle

4900

4905

4910

Into this lofty circle smuggle,
While in a heart depraved you snuggle. 4915
Fools, wizards, heretics are near allied.

Mephistopheles. I see the learned man in what you say!
What you don't touch, for you lies miles away;
What you don't grasp, is wholly lost to you;
What you don't reckon, you believe not true; 4920
What you don't weigh, that has for you no weight;
What you don't coin, you're sure is counterfeit.

Emperor. That's not the way to help or aught determine.
What do you mean now with this Lenten sermon?
I'm sated of this endless "If" and "How." 4925
There is no money. Well, then, get it now!

Mephistopheles. I'll furnish what you wish and more. It's true,
It is a light task, yet the light's a burden too.
The gold lies there and yet to win it,
That is the art—who knows how to begin it? 4930
Recall those fearful times when roving bands
Poured like a deluge drowning men and lands,
How many men, so greatly did they fear,
Concealed their dearest treasure there and here.
So it was of old when mighty Rome held sway,
So it was till yesterday, aye, till today. 4935
It all lies buried in the earth, to save it;
The earth's the Emperor's, and he should have it.

Treasurer. Now for a fool, his words are noways trite.
That is, in truth, the old Imperial Right. 4940

Chancellor. Satan is laying his golden nooses;
We're dealing with no right and pious uses.

Steward. If he brings welcome gifts to court, I'm sure,
A little wrong with them I can endure.

Commander-in-Chief. Shrewd fool to promise each what will befit; 4945
Whence it may come, no soldier cares a whit.

Mephistopheles. Perhaps you think I'm trying to betray you;
Well, here's the astrologer; ask him, I pray you.
Circle on circle, hour and house he knows.
Tell us then what the heavenly aspect shows. 4950

Murmurs.

Two rogues—each to the other known—
Dreamer and Fool—so near the throne—
An ancient ditty—worn and weak—
The Fool will prompt—the Sage will speak—

Astrologer [*MEPHISTOPHELES prompting him*].
The Sun himself is gold of purest ray, 4955
The herald Mercury serves for love and pay;
Dame Venus has bewitched you all, for she,
In youth and age, looks on you lovingly.

Chaste Luna has her humours whimsical;
The strength of Mars, though striking not, threats all;
And Jupiter is still the fairest star.

4960

Saturn is great, small to our eyes and far;
Him as a metal we don't venerate,
Little in worth but heavy in his weight.

Ah, when with Sol chaste Luna doth unite,
Silver with gold, the world is glad and bright.

4965

It's easy then to get all that one seeks:
Parks, palaces, and breasts and rosy cheeks.

All these procures the highly learned man
Who can perform what one of us never can.

4970

Emperor. All that he says I hear twice o'er,
And yet I'm not convinced the more.

Murmurs.

What's all this smoke—a worn-out joke—
Astrology—or alchemy—
An oft-heard strain—hope stirred in vain—
If he appear—a rogue is here—

4975

Mephistopheles. They stand around and gape in wonder;

They won't believe that a great prize is found.

Of mandrakes one appears to maunder,
Another of the sable hound.

4980

What though one's wit make others prickle,
Another cry out: "Sorcery!"—

If still he sometimes feels his sole a-tickle
And his stride is not what it used to be!

You feel the secret operation
Of Nature's endless ruling might,
And from earth's undermost foundation
A living trace steals up to light.

4985

When in your limbs you're feeling twitches,
When something lays uncanny hold,

4990

Be swift to delve, dig up the riches,
There lies the fiddler, lies the gold!

Murmurs.

My foot's like lead, can't move about—
Cramp's in my arm—that's only gout—
A tickle's jerking my big toe—
All down my back it hurts me so—
From signs like these it should be clear
The richest gold-preserve is here.

4995

Emperor. Make haste! You shan't escape today.

Prove now your scummy, lying phrases
And show at once those noble spaces.

5000

My sword and sceptre I will put away;

- If you're not lying, I will lend
 My own exalted hands, this work to end,
 But if you're lying, I'll send you to hell! 5005
- Mephistopheles.* That pathway I could find full well!
 But I've not words enough to tell
 What, ownerless, is waiting everywhere.
 The farmer, ploughing furrows with his share,
 Turns with the clods a pot of gold; 5010
 He seeks saltpetre in a clay wall, and
 He finds a golden, golden roll to hold,
 Scared and rejoiced, in his own wretched hand.
 Who would explore the earth-hid wonder,
 What vaultings must he burst asunder, 5015
 What dark ways burrow through and under
 Near neighbouring on the world below!
 In cellars vast, preserved of old,
 Plates, dishes, beakers too, of gold
 He sees displayed there, row on row. 5020
 There goblets, made of rubies, stand,
 And if he'll put them to a use,
 Beside them is an ancient juice.
 Yet—you'll believe my master-hand—
 The wooden staves are long since rotten; 5025
 A cask of tartar has the wine begotten.
 Not only gold and jewels rare,
 Proud wines of noble essences are there,
 Enveiled in horror and in gloom.
 The wise seek here without dismay. 5030
 A fool can recognize a thing by day;
 In darkness mysteries are at home.
- Emperor.* What is the gain of dark? You can have that!
 If aught has value, it must come to light.
 Who can detect a rogue in dead of night? 5035
 All cows are black, and grey is every cat.
 The pots down there, heavy with golden freight—
 Drive your plough on, unearthen them straight.
- Mephistopheles.* Take hoc and spade yourself, dig on!
 You'll grow great, through this peasant-toil. 5040
 A herd of golden calves¹ anon
 Will wrench their way out of the soil.
 Then with delight, without delay,
 Yourself you can, you will your love array.
 A jewel in which light and colour dance 5045
 Both Majesty and Beauty can enhance.
- Emperor.* Be quick, be quick! How long are we to wait?
- Astrologer* [*as above*]. Such urgent longing, Sire, pray moderate!
 Let first the motley, joyous play proceed,

¹Cf. Exodus, 32. 3-4.

THE SECOND PART, I

125

To no fair goal can minds distracted lead.

5050

First, penance in a calm mood doth behoove us,

Earn what's beneath us by what is above us.

Who wishes good, should first be good,

Who wishes joy, should mollify his blood,

Who asks for wine, the ripe grape should he press,

5055

Who hopes for miracles, more faith possess.

Emperor. So let the time in merriment be spent!

Ash-Wednesday's coming to our heart's content.

Meanwhile we'll celebrate, whate'er befall,

All the more merrily mad Carnival.

5060

Trumpets, exeunt.

Mephistopheles. How closely linked are Luck and Merit,

Is something fools have never known.

Had they the Wise Man's Stone, I swear it,

There'd be no Wise Man for the Stone.

A SPACIOUS HALL

With adjoining apartments decorated and adorned for a masquerade.

Herald. Don't think ye'll here see German revels,

5065

A Dance of Death, of Fools and Devils!

A cheerful festival awaits you here.

Our ruler, when to Rome he went campaigning,

His profit and your pleasure gaining,

The perils of the Alps disdaining,

5070

Won for himself a realm of cheer.

First, at the holy feet bowed down,

A grant of power he besought,

And when he went to fetch his crown,

The fool's-cap too for us he brought.

5075

Now we are all new-born in years,

And every well-sophisticated man

Happily draws it over head and ears.

Akin to crazy fools he now appears,

Under it acting wisely as he can.

5080

I see the crowds are coming yonder,

Some pair in love, some swing asunder,

Crowd presses crowd, like youth let out of school.

Come in or out, let naught be daunting!

Now too as ever holds the rule:

5085

A hundred thousand follies vaunting,

The world remains one great, big fool!

Flower Girls [song accompanied by mandolins].

That ye may approval tender

We're adorned tonight in sport;

Florentines, we joined the splendour

5090

Of this festive German court.

Flowers in our chestnut tresses
 We are wearing gay and bright,
 Silken threads and silken jesses
 Also play their part tonight; 5095
 For we think we are deserving
 All your praises full and clear.
 See the flowers we made, preserving
 All their bloom throughout the year.
 Scraps of every tint we've taken, 5100
 Each with due symmetric form;
 Though each may your wit awaken,
 See the whole and feel its charm.
 Fair are we in every feature,
 Flower maidens gay of heart; 5105
 For the ways of women's nature
 Are so near akin to art.

Herald.

Let us see your baskets' riches;
 Head and arms bear lovely treasure,
 Bear gay beauty that bewitches. 5110
 Let each choose what gives him pleasure.
 Hasten till we see appearing
 Gardens in each nook and alley.
 Pedlars, wares, such beauty bearing,
 Well the throng may round them rally. 5115

Flower Girls.

Barter in these cheery places,
 But don't haggle as ye go!
 And in brief and pithy phrases,
 What he has, let each one know.

An Olive Branch with Fruits.

Flowery sprays I do not covet, 5120
 Strife I shun, I am above it;
 To my nature it is strange.
 Yet I am the nation's marrow,
 Pledge secure 'gainst spear and arrow,
 Sign of peace where men may range. 5125
 And today I'm hoping, fleetly
 To adorn a fair head meetly.

A Wreath of Golden Ears.

To bedeck you, gifts of Ceres
 Will be lovely, sweet, and rare;
 What for us most wished and dear is 5130
 Be for your adornment fair.

A Fancy Wreath.

Mallow-like, these gay-hued flowers,
 From the moss, a wondrous bloom!

THE SECOND PART, I

127

They are rare, in Nature's bowers,
But Dame Fashion gives them room.

5135

A Fancy Nosegay.

Name me? Theophrastus¹ never
Would a name for me assever!
If to some scarce worth a penny,
Still I hope I may please many
If she'll take whom she possesses,
If she'll twine me in her tresses,
Or the fairest fate deciding,
On her heart grant me abiding.

5140

Rosebuds, a Challenge.

Let fantastic gaudy flowers
Bloom as Fashion oft empowers,
Wondrous-strange and finely moulded,
Such as Nature ne'er unfolded.
Green stalks, gold bells, look entrancing
From rich locks, their charm enhancing!
But we hide from mortal eyes.
Happy he who us espies!
When anew the summer beameth
As the rosebud, kindling, gleameth,
From such bliss who'd be abstaining?
Sweet the promise and attaining
Which in Flora's fair domain
Rule over vision, heart, and brain.

5145

5150

5155

*Under green, leafy arcades the FLOWER GIRLS adorn their wares
daintily.*

Gardeners [song accompanied by theorbos].

See the flowers sprout unhasting,
Charms around your head they're weaving!
Fruits lead not astray, deceiving;
One enjoys them in the tasting.

5160

Sun-burnt faces offer gladly
Cherries, royal plums, and peaches.
Buy! The tongue, the palate, teaches
That your eye can judge but badly.

5165

Come! The ripest fruit entices,
Eat it, with glad relish smitten;
Over a rose one poetizes,
But an apple must be bitten.

Grant us, prithee, to be mated
With your youth so flowery-fair!
Neighbourly so decorated
Be our plenteous ripe ware.

5170

Under garlands gay that wind them

¹Theophrastus (born about 390 B.C.) has been called the father of botany.

In adorned and leafy bowers, 5175
 All are here for you to find them:
 Buds and leaves and fruit and flowers.

Midst alternating songs, accompanied by guitars and theorbos, both choruses continue to set their wares out attractively in tiers and to offer them for sale.

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER.

Mother.

Maiden, when thou cam'st to light,
 Little caps I wove thee:
 Body tender, face so bright, 5180
 How they made me love thee!
 Thought of thee as quickly won,
 Wedded to the richest son,
 Thought as wife wouldst prove thee.

Ah, already many a year 5185
 Hence, unused, has fled;
 Motley host of wooers here
 Swiftly past has speeded.
 With the one didst nimbly dance,
 Gav'st the other nudge and glance 5190
 Which he might have heeded.

Every fête that we might plan,
 Vain it was to match one;
 Forfeit games and "Hindmost Man,"
 Naught availed to snatch one. 5195
 Each fool wears today his cap;
 Darling, open now thy lap,
 Haply wilt thou catch one.

Girl playmates, young and fair, join the group; a confidential chatter is heard. Fishers and fowlers with nets, fishing-rods, limed twigs, and other gear enter and mingle with the pretty girls. Reciprocal attempts to win, catch, escape, and hold fast give opportunity for the most agreeable dialogues.

Woodcutters [enter boisterously and boorishly].

Make room! A clearing!
 Spaces for revel 5200
 Trees that we level
 Crash in their falling;
 And when we're hauling,
 We hit what's nearing.
 Our praises grudge not, 5205
 This truth pray nourish:
 Did rough folk drudge not
 In every county,

THE SECOND PART, I 129

Could fine folk flourish,
Come by their bounty, 5210
However they fretted?
Learn this in season!
For ye'd be freezing,
Had we not sweated.

*Pulcinelli*¹ [*awkward, almost silly*].

Oh, fools that ye are, 5215

Born bent, and we are
The really clever,
Loads bearing never.
Our caps and jackets
And rags are packets 5220
Quite light to carry.

And we are merry,
Forever lazy,
In slippers easy,
In them to shuffle 5225

Through market and scuffle,
To gape at the pother,
Croak at each other.

Hceding the racket,
Through crowds that pack it, 5230
Like eels we're slipping,

Together tripping,
All mad together.

We care not whether
Ye blame or praise us, 5235
Nothing can faze us.

Parasites [*fawningly lustful*].

Of you, stout porters,
And your supporters,
The charcoal-burners,
We are not spurners. 5240

For all the bending
And nods assenting,
Phrases too flowing,

And two-ways blowing,
They're warming and chilling 5245
Just as one's feeling,

Yet what the profit?
Heaven might send fire,
Enormous, dire,

But, then, what of it, 5250
Were there no billets
Or coal in barrows

To grill your skilletts

¹Clowns.

Through to their marrows?
 There's sizzling, broiling, 5255
 There's bubbling, boiling.
 True taster, picker,
 The platter-licker,
 He smells the roasting,
 He sniffs the fishes, 5260
 With gusto accosting
 His patron's dishes.

A Drunken Man [maudlin].

'Sdeath today to all my worry!
 For I feel so frank and free;
 Fresh delight and ditties merry, 5265
 These I brought along with me.
 So I'm drinking, drink ye, drink yel
 Clink your glasses, clink ye, clink yel
 Ye behind there, now come on!
 Clink your glasses, so it's done. 5270

Angrily my wife shrieked loudly,
 Sneering at my piebald suit,
 And although I swaggered proudly,
 "Scarecrow, scarecrow!" did she hoot.
 Yet I'm drinking, drink ye, drink yel 5275
 Clink your glasses, cling ye, clink yel
 Clink them, scarecrows, every one!
 Clinking, clinking, so it's done.

Say not that my way I'm losing,
 I am where my worries fade. 5280
 If mine host lend not, refusing,
 Hostess lends, or eke the maid.
 Still I drink on! Drink ye, drink yel
 Up, ye others! Clink ye, clink yel
 Each to each! Thus on and on! 5285
 Now methinks that it is done.

How and where I'm pleasure plying,
 Still may it always be at hand.
 Let me lie where I am lying,
 For I can no longer stand. 5290

Chorus.

Brothers all, now drink ye, drink yel
 Toast ye gaily, clink ye, clink yel
 Sit ye firm on bench and board!
 Under the table lies one floored.

The HERALD announces various poets, poets by nature, courtly and knightly minstrels, sentimentalists as well as enthusiasts. In the throng of competitors of all kinds no one allows another to begin a speech. One slips past with a few words.

Satirist.

Know ye what my soul as poet
Chiefly would delight and cheer?
Sing and say, if I dared do it,
That which none would like to hear. 5295

The poets of night and churchyards excuse themselves, because they are just engaged in a most interesting conversation with a newly-arisen vampire, and from it a new school of poetry may perhaps arise; the HERALD is obliged to accept their apologies and meanwhile he calls forth Greek mythology which, in modern masks, loses neither its character nor its charm.

THE GRACES.

Aglaia.

Charm we're bringing into living,
So be charming in your giving! 5300

Hegemone.

Charming be ye in receiving!
Lovely is desire's achieving.

Euphrosyne.

And when peacefully ye're living,
Be most charming your thanksgiving!

THE FATES.

Atropos.

I, the eldest Fate, from yonder
For the while to spin am bidden.
Much to think of, much to ponder,
In life's tender thread is hidden. 5305

Finest flax I winnow fealty
That your thread be supple, tender;
Fingers shrewd will twirl it neatly,
Make it even, smooth, and slender. 5310

Ye who, warm with dance and pleasure,
All too wanton, snatch a token,
Think that this thread has a measure,
Have a care! It might be broken. 5315

Clotho.

Know ye that the shears were lately
Given to my care to ply;
For our Ancient's conduct greatly
Did, in truth, none edify. 5320

She drags on most useless spinnings
On and on in air and light,
Promise of most glorious winnings

Clips and drags to realms of night.
 Yet when I was young and reigning, 5325
 I, too, erred oft in those years;
 Now I yield to curb restraining,
 In their case I keep the shears.
 So I gladly wear a bridle,
 And this scene with joy survey. 5330
 In these hours so gay and idle,
 Revel, riot, sport, and play!

Lachesis.

Unto me, alone discerning,
 Was the thread's control decreed;
 For my reel, forever turning, 5335
 Never erred through too great speed.
 Threads are coming, threads are reeling,
 Each one in its course I guide;
 None may slip from spindle wheeling,
 Each must in its orbit glide. 5340
 Could I once forget in leisure,
 For the world I'd fear with pain;
 Hours, they count, and years, they measure,
 And the Weaver takes the skein.

Herald. Those coming now, ye'd never recognize them, 5345
 However learned ye were in ancient letters.
 To look at them—the world's worst ill-abettors—
 Ye'd call them welcome guests and prize them.
 They are the Furies, no one will believe us.
 Fain are they, well-made, friendly, young moreover; 5350
 But if ye lend them ear, ye will discover
 How serpent-like such doves can wound and grieve us.
 Malicious are they—true!—and with effront'ry,
 But now when each fool boasts his reputation,
 They too ask not angelic exaltation; 5355
 They know they are the pests of town and country.

THE FURIES.

Alecto. What boots it? For to trust us ye'll not stickle,
 For each is young and fair, a coaxing kitten.
 If one among you by a girl is smitten,
 We shall not cease, his ears to scratch and tickle, 5360
 Until we dare to tell him, to his loathing,
 That for this man and that one she is primping,
 Crooked in her back, all wit doth lack, and limping,
 And if betrothed to him, she's good-for-nothing!
 And the betrothed—we know the way to sting her. 5365
 Why scarce a week ago her precious lover
 To such-and-such a girl spoke basely of her;
 Though they be reconciled, a sting will linger.

Megaera. That's but a jest! For when they once are married,

I go to work in every case to fritter

5370

The fairest bliss away with fancies bitter.

The moods of men are varied, hours are varied.

None holds embraced what his desire has chosen,

But seeks a More-desired with foolish yearning

And from long-wonted, highest blessings turning,

5375

Flees a warm love and tries to warm a frozen.

I'm skilled in managing such household troubles,

And Asmodeus,¹ comrade true, I summon

To scatter strife betimes twixt man and woman;

Thus I destroy the human race in couples.

5380

Tisiphone.

Poison, steel—not words malicious—

Mix I, whet I, for the traitor.

Lov'st thou others? Sooner, later,

Overwhelms thee ruin vicious.

What the sweetest moment offers,

5385

Turns perforce to wormwood galling!

Here no haggling, pulling, hauling;

As one sins, one always suffers.

None shall sing about forgiving!

To the rocks my cause I'm crying.

5390

Echo, hark! "Revenge!" replying.

For the unstable, death! not living!

Herald. Now, if it please you, stand aside a pace,

For what comes now is not your kind or race.

Ye see a mountain pressing through the throng,

5395

Its flanks with brilliant housings proudly hung,

A head with long tusks, snake-like snout below.

A mystery! but soon the key I'll show.

A dainty woman on his neck is sitting

And with her wand subjects him to her bidding;

5400

Another stands aloft, sublime to see,

Girt by a radiance dazzling, blinding me.

Beside them chained, two noble women near,

Fearful the one, the other blithe of cheer.

One longs for freedom and one feels she's free.

5405

Let each declare now who she be.

Fear.

Lamps and lights and torches smoking

Through this turmoil gleam around;

Midst these faces, shamming, joking,

I, alas, in chains am bound.

5410

Hence, ye throngs absurdly merry!

I mistrust your grins with right;

¹A spirit of strife; cf. Tobit, 3. 8.

Every single adversary
Presses nearer in this night.

Friend turned foe would here bewray me, 5415
But his mask I know well. Stay,
Yonder's one who wished to slay me;
Now revealed, he slinks away.

Through the wide world I would wander,
Following every path that led, 5420
But destruction threatens yonder,
Holds me fast twixt gloom and dread.

Hope. Hail, belovèd sisters, hail!
Though today and yesterday
Ye have loved this maskers' play, 5425
Yet tomorrow ye'll unveil.
This I know of you quite surely.
If beneath the torches' flaring
We can't find our special pleasure,
Yet in days of cheerful leisure, 5430
As our will doth bid us purely,
Now in groups, now singly faring,
We'll roam over lovely leas,
Resting, doing, as we please,
In a life no cares assailing, 5435
Naught forgoing, never failing.
Everywhere as welcome guest
Let us enter, calm in mind,
Confident that we shall find
Somewhere, certainly, the best. 5440

Prudence.

Two of man's chief foes, behold them,
Fear and Hope, in fetters mated;
From this crowd I'll keep and hold them.
Room, make room! Ye're liberated.

I conduct the live colossus, 5445
See the burden that it carries,
And the steepest pass it crosses,
Step by step, and never wearies.

But upon the summit of it
Yonder goddess with her pinions 5450
Broad and agile, seeking profit,
Turns to spy all man's dominions.

Girt is she by splendour glorious
Shining far along all courses,
Victory her name! Victorious 5455
Goddess of all active forces.

*Zoïlo-Thersites.*¹ Ho, ho! Just right I've reached this spot,

¹Goethe combines in one figure Zoilus, who defamed Homer, and Thersites, who defamed Agamemnon (see *Iliad*, ii).

We're one and all a wretched lot!

And yet the goal I've chosen me

Is she up there, Dame Victory.

5460

She with her snowy wings spread out

Thinks she's an eagle, past all doubt,

And wheresoever she may stir,

Thinks men and lands belong to her.

But when some glorious deed is done,

5465

At once I put my armour on.

Up with the low, down with the high,

The crookèd straight, the straight awry—

That, only, makes me feel aglow,

And on this earth I'll have it so.

5470

Herald. Then take thou that, a master-blow

From my good staff, thou wretched hound,

Then straightway writhe and twist around!—

How swift the two-fold dwarfish clump

Balls up into a loathsome lump!—

5475

But seel lump turns to egg—a wonder!

Puffs itself up and bursts asunder.

Thence comes a pair of twins to earth,

Adder and bat—a wondrous birth!

On in the dust one crawls and creeps,

5480

The black one round the ceiling sweeps,

And where they haste to join again,

To be the third I am not fain.

Murmuring.

Come! they're dancing now back there!—

No! I want to flee from here—

5485

Feel ye not the ghost-like breed

Creeping, wheeling, round us speed?—

Something whizzes past my hair—

My foot felt a something there—

Still not one of us is harmed—

5490

But we all have been alarmed—

Now all ruined is our fun—

This, the beasts! they wanted done.

Herald. Since on me, when masquerading,

Herald's duties ye've been lading,

5495

Stern I guard the portal, wary

Lest into your revels merry

Aught may slink of harmful savour;

Neither do I shrink nor waver.

Yet I fear lest spectres erring

5500

Through the windows may be faring;

If black arts and spooks beset you,

- From them I could never get you.
 Of the dwarf we were suspicious.
 Lo! Back there a pageant issues! 5505
 As a herald, it's my duty
 To explain those forms of beauty,
 But what's past all comprehending,
 For that I've no explanation.
 Help ye, all, my education!— 5510
 See what hitherward is tending!
 Lo! a four-yoked chariot splendid
 Through the crowd its way has wended,
 Yet the crowd it does not sunder;
 I can see no crushing yonder. 5515
 In the distance colours shimmer,
 Stars gay-coloured beam and flimmer,
 Magic-lantern-like they glimmer.
 All storm on as to assault.
 Clear the way! I shudder!
- A Boy Charioteer.* Halt! 5520
 Steeds, let now your wings fall idle,
 Feel the well-accustomed bridle;
 Master self as you I master;
 When I thrill you, on! and faster!
 Let us honour now these spaces! 5525
 Look around at all the faces;
 More and more admirers cluster.
 Herald, up! Take wonted muster!
 Ere we flee, tell thou our stories,
 Name us and describe and show us; 5530
 For we all are allegories,
 Therefore thou shouldst surely know us.
- Herald.* There's no name I could ascribe thee,
 But I rather might describe thee.
- Boy Charioteer.* Try it then!
- Herald.* I must avow, 5535
 Firstly, young and fair art thou.
 A half-grown boy thou art; but women rather
 Would see thee full-grown altogether.
 It seems that thou wilt be a fickle wooer;
 Right from the start a real undoer. 5540
- Boy Charioteer.* That's well worth hearing! On with thee,
 Discover now the riddle's happy key.
- Herald.* Thy flashing ebony eyes, locks black and glowing,
 More radiant from the jewelled diadem!
 And what a graceful robe doth stream 5545
 From shoulder down to buskin flowing,
 With glittering gaud and purple hem!
 Now might we flouting "Maiden!" deem thee,

Yet, good or ill as it might be,
Already maidens would esteem thee.

5550

They'd teach thee soon thine A B C.

Boy Charioteer. And yonder one, in splendour glowing,
Who proudly sits on chariot throne?

Herald. A king he seems, of wealth o'erflowing;

Happy the man who has his favour won!

5555

He has naught more to earn and capture,

He swift espies where aught's amiss,

And has in giving more pure rapture

Than in possessing and in bliss.

Boy Charioteer. To stop with this will not avail;

5560

Thou must describe him in far more detail.

Herald. There's no describing Dignity.

The healthy, full-moon face I see,

The lips so full, the cheeks so blooming

Beneath the turban's beauty looming,

5565

The flowing robe he's richly wearing—

What shall I say of such a bearing?

He seems a ruler known to me.

Boy Charioteer. Plutus,¹ the god of wealth, is he.

Hither he comes in gorgeous trim;

5570

Sorely the Emperor longs for him.

Herald. Now thine own *What* and *How* relate to me!

Boy Charioteer. I am Profusion, I am Poesy!

The poet who's attained his goal

When he's poured out his inmost soul.

5575

I too am rich with untold pelf

And value me the peer of Plutus' self,

Adorn, enliven, make his revels glow;

And what he lacks, that I bestow.

Herald. Bragging becomes thee charmingly,

5580

But now thine arts, pray, let us see.

Boy Charioteer. Here see me snap my fingers. Lo!

Around the chariot gleam and glow!

And now a necklace of pearls appears!

Continuing to snap his fingers in every direction.

Here spangled gold for neck and ears

5585

And flawless comb and coronet

And rings with precious jewels set.

Flamelets I scatter too in turn,

Waiting to see where they may burn.

Herald. How the dear mob is snatching, seizing,

5590

Even the giver almost squeezing!

Dream-like he's scatt'ring gems where all

Are snatching in the spacious hall.

But what is this? A brand-new juggle!

¹Faust, so disguised.

However busily one snatch and struggle, 5595
 His trouble really does not pay;
 The gifts take wing and fly away.
 The pearls are loosened from their band
 And beetles scabble in his hand;
 He shakes them off, the poor biped, 5600
 And then they hum around his head.
 Others, instead of solid things,
 Catch butterflies with flimsy wings.
 How much he promises, the knavel
 Glitter of gold was all he gave. 5605

Boy Charioteer.

Of masks, I note, thou canst proclaim each feature.
 Beneath the shell to fathom out the nature
 Is not the herald's courtly task;
 A keener eye for that we ask.
 But feuds I shun, if only in suggestion; 5610
 To thee, lord, I address my speech and question.

Turning to PLUTUS.

Didst thou not give me charge supreme
 Over the four-yoked, whirlwind team?
 Guide I not happily as thou ledest?
 Am I not everywhere thou biddest? 5615
 And on bold pinions did I not for thee
 Bear off the palm of victory?
 However oft for thee as I've contended,
 Success was ever my portion; and when now
 The laurel decorates thy brow, 5620
 Did not my hand and art entwine and blend it?

Plutus. If need be that I testify, then hear it!

I say with joy: Thou art spirit of my spirit!
 Thy deeds are ever after my own will;
 Rich as I am, thou art richer still. 5625
 Thy service to reward in fitting measure,
 The laurel more than all my crowns I treasure.
 This truth in all men's hearts I would instil:
 In thee, dear son, I have much pleasure.

Boy Charioteer [to the crowd].

The greatest gifts my hand deals out, 5630
 Lo! I have scattered roundabout.
 On this head and on that one too
 There glows a flamelet that I threw.
 From one to other head it skips,
 To this one cleaves, from that one slips; 5635
 It seldom flares up like a plume,
 And swiftly beams in transient bloom.
 Ere many its worth recognize,
 It burns out mournfully and dies.

Women's Chatter.

There on the chariot sits a man
 Who surely is a charlatan,
 Hunched up behind, a perfect clown,
 By thirst and hunger so worn down
 As naught before, and if ye'd pinch,
 He has no flesh to feel and flinch. 5645

*Starveling.*¹ Away from me, ye odious crew!
 Welcome, I know, I never am to you.
 When hearth and home were women's zone,
 As Avaritia I was known.
 Then did our household thrive throughout, 5650
 For much came in and naught went out!
 Zealous was I for chest and bin;
 'Twas even said my zeal was sin.
 But since in years most recent and depraving
 Woman is wont no longer to be saving 5655
 And, like each tardy payer, collars
 Far more desires than she has dollars,
 The husband now has much to bore him;
 Wherever he looks, debts loom before him.
 Her spinning-money is turned over 5660
 To grace her body or her lover;
 Better she feasts and drinks still more
 With all her wretched lover-corps.
 Gold charms me all the more for this:
 Male's now my gender, I am Avarice! 5665

Leader of the Women.

With dragons be the dragon avaricious,
 It's naught but lies, deceiving stuff!
 To stir up men he comes, malicious,
 Whereas men now are troublesome enough.

Women [en masse].

The scarecrow! Box his ears, the japer!
 Why does the wooden cross threat here?
 As if his ugly face we'd fear!
 Dragons are made of wood and paper.
 Have at him, crowd him, scoff and jeer! 5670

Herald. Peace! By my staff! Peace or begone!
 And yet my aid's scarce needed here.
 In yonder space so quickly won
 See the grim monsters moving on,
 Swift to unfold their pinions' double pair.
 The dragons shake themselves in ire; 5680
 Their scaly jaws spew smoke and fire.

¹Mephistopheles.

The crowd has fled, the place is clear.

PLUTUS descends from his chariot.

Herald. He's stepping down, what royal grace!

He beck, the dragons move apace;

Down from the chariot they've borne the chest

5685

With all its gold, and Avarice thereon.

There at his feet it stands at rest;

A marvel how it was ever done.

Plutus [to the CHARIOTEER].

Now art thou rid of thy too heavy burden,

Free art thou! Off to thine own sphere and guerdon!

5690

Thy sphere's not here! Here shapes most hideous,

Distorted, motley, wild, press in on us.

Where thou see'st naught but lovely clarity,

Where thine own vision is enough for thee,

Thither where only Good and Beauty please and wait,

5695

Away to Solitude! there thine own world create!

Boy Charioteer. Thus I esteem myself a worthy envoy of thee,

And as my nearest kinsman do I love thee.

Where thou art, Plenty is; where I remain,

Each feels himself enriched by glorious gain.

5700

Oft in the clash of life a man doth waver:

Shall he in thee or me seek favour?

Thy followers can idly rest, it's true;

Who follows me always has work to do.

My deeds in darkness never are concealed;

5705

If I but breathe, I am at once revealed.

And so, farewell! My bliss thou grantest me,

But whisper low and I am back with thee.

Exit as he came.

Plutus. It's time now to unloose the precious metals.

I strike the padlocks with the herald's rod.

5710

The chest flies open! See in brazen kettles

A boiling, bubbling up of golden blood.

First, ornaments of crowns, chains, rings will follow!

Seething, it threatens all to melt and swallow.

Alternating Cries from the crowd.

See here! and there! how treasures brim!

5715

The chest is filling to the rim—

Vessels of gold are grilling there,

And coins in rolls are milling there.—

As if just minted, ducats jump,

Oh, how my heart begins to thump!—

5720

All that I want I see and more!

They're rolling there along the floor.—

It's yours, they say—appease your itch,

Just stoop a bit and rise up rich.—

Swift as the lightning, we, the rest,
Will take possession of the chest.

5725

Herald. What does this mean? Ye silly folk!

It's but a masquerading joke.

Naught more can be desired tonight;

Think ye we give you gold outright?

5730

Verily in this game for such

As ye, yes, vouchers were too much.

Blockheads! A pleasant show, forsooth,

Ye take at once as solid truth.

What's truth to you?—Delusion vain,

5735

Catch where ye can, ye clutch amain.

Plutus, chief mummer, hero of the masque,

Drive from the field this folk, I ask.

Plutus. Thy staff is apt for it, I see;

Lend it a little while to me.

5740

I'll dip it swift in seething glare.

Now, on your guard, ye masks, beware!

Snap, sparks, and flashes, see it throw!

Thy staff already is aglow.

Whoever crowds too close to me

5745

I'll straightway singe relentlessly.

And now upon my rounds I'll go.

Cries and Crowding.

Alas! it's up with us, oh woel—

Away, escape! Escape who can!—

Fall back, fall back, thou hindmost man!

5750

Hot sparks are flying in my face.—

I stagger from the glowing mace!—

Lost are we all, we all are lost!—

Back, back, ye masquerading host!

Back, senseless mob, don't come so nigh!

5755

Had I but wings, away I'd fly!—

Plutus. Backward the circle round us shrinks,

And no one has been scorched, methinks.

Scattered by fright,

The crowd takes flight.

5760

Yet, symbol of the reign of law,

A ring invisible I'll draw.

Herald. A glorious deed hast done tonight.

How can I thank thy sapient might?

Plutus. My noble friend, be patient yet;

5765

Many a tumult still doth threaten.

Avaritia. Here, if we like, we can look on

And view this circle at our leisure;

To stand in front always gives women pleasure

Where gaping or where nibbling's to be done. 5770

Not yet so wholly rusty are my senses

But that a woman fair is always fair;

And since today it costs me no expenses,

We'll go a-courting with an easy air.

Because, though, in such over-crowded places 5775

Not every ear distinctly hears all phrases,

I'll wisely try—I hope not vainly—

In pantomime to show my meaning plainly.

Hand, foot, and gesture will not now suffice,

So I must use a farcical device. 5780

I'll treat the gold as were it mere wet clay;

This metal I can turn in any way.

Herald. The skinny fool! What is that he began?

Can he have humour, such a starveling man?

He's kneading all the gold to dough; 5785

Beneath his hands it's soft, yet though

He squeeze it, roll it, as he will,

Misshapen is it even still.

He turns to the women there, and they

All scream and want to get away, 5790

With gestures of disgust and loathing.

The mischievous rogue will stop at nothing.

I fear a joyous man is he

When he's offended decency.

Through silence I'll not lend my backing; 5795

Give me my staff to send him packing.

Plutus. What threatens from without he does not see.

Let him go on with his tom-fooling;

There'll be no room soon for his drooling;

The Law is mighty, mightier Necessity. 5800

Tumult and Song.

The wild host comes in all its might,

From woodland dell and mountain height.

They stride along—resist who can!

They celebrate their great god Pan.

They know indeed what none can guess; 5805

Into the vacant ring they press.

Plutus. I know you well, you and your great god Pan!

Together ye've performed a daring plan.

I know right well what is not known to all

And ope the circle duly to their call. 5810

Oh, may good fortune be decreed them!

The strangest thing may now befall,

They know not where their steps may lead them;

They have not looked ahead at all.

Savage Song.

Ye folk bedight, ye tinsel-stuff!
 They're coming rude, they're coming rough;
 In lofty leap, in speedy chase,
 They come, a stout and sturdy race.

5815

Fauns. The faun-host flocks

In merry round,
 The oak-wreath bound
 On curly locks;
 A pair of finely pointed ears
 Out from the curly head appears,
 A stubby nose, face broad and flat.
 With women no one's harmed by that;
 And if the faun his paw advance,
 The fairest will hardly refuse to dance.

5820

5825

A Satyr. The satyr now comes hopping in

With foot of goat and withered shin;
 He needs to have them wiry-thin,
 For chamois-like on mountain heights
 To look around him he delights.
 Braced by the air of freedom then,
 He jeers at children, women, and men,
 Who deep in the valley's smoke and stew
 Fondly imagine they're living too,
 While pure and undisturbed and lone
 The world up there is all his own.

5830

5835

Gnomes. Tripping, a little crowd appears.

They do not like to go in pairs;
 In mossy garb, with lamplet bright,
 They move commingling, swift and light,
 Where each his task can best perform,
 Like firefly-ants, a crowding swarm.
 They scurry, busy, here and there,
 Bustling and working everywhere.

5840

5845

Kinship to kind "Good-men" we own,
 As surgeons of the rocks are known,
 The mountains high, go sapping them,
 The swelling veins, go tapping them;
 Metals we hurl on pile on pile,
 With cheery hail—"Good Luck!"—the while,
 A greeting well-meant through and through.
 We're friends of all good men and true.
 Yet gold we bring and gold reveal
 That men may pander and may steal,
 That iron fail not his proud hand
 Who ever wholesale murder planned.
 He whom these three commandments fail to bother

5850

5855

5860

Will pay no heed to any other.
 For all that we are not to blame;
 As we are patient, so be ye the same!

Giants. "The Wild Men of the Woods"—their name,

In the Hartz Mountains known to fame.

5865

In nature's nakedness and might

They come, each one of giant height,

A fir tree's trunk in each right hand,

Around their loins a bulging band,

Apron of twigs and leaves uncouth;

5870

Such guards the Pope has not, in truth.

Nymphs in chorus [surrounding GREAT PAN].¹

He's really here!—

Of this world-sphere

The All we fête

In Pan the Great.

5875

Ye gayest ones, surround him here,

Dance madly, hov'ring round him here,

For since he's solemn and yet kind,

Man's happiness he has in mind.

Even beneath the azure, vaulted roof

5880

He ever kept slumber far aloof;

Yet purling brooks seek him in quest

And soft airs cradle him to rest.

And when he sleeps at mid of day,

No leaflet stirs upon its spray;

5885

Health-giving plants with balsam rare

Pervade the still and silent air.

Then may the nymph in joy not leap

And where she stood, she falls asleep.

But when at unexpected hour

5890

His voice is heard in all its power,

Like crack of lightning, roar of sea,

Then no one knows which way to flee.

Brave warriors into panic break,

And in the tumult heroes quake.

5895

Hence honour to whom honour's due,

Hail him who led us here to you!

Deputation of Gnomes [to GREAT PAN].

When the treasure, rich and shining,

Winds through clefts its thread-like way

And naught but the rod's divining

5900

Can its labyrinths display,

Troglodytes in caverns spacious,

Under vaulted roofs we bide,

While in day's pure air thou, gracious,

¹A mask of the Emperor.

THE SECOND PART, I

145

All the treasures dost divide.

5905

We discover here quite near us

Treasure rich, a fountain vein,

Aptly promising to bear us

More than one could hope to gain.

This thou mayst achieve at pleasure,

5910

Take it, Sire, into thy care!

In thy hands doth every treasure

Yield the whole world blessings rare.

Plutus [to THE HERALD].

We must possess ourselves, serene in spirit,

And come what may must confidently bear it.

5915

Still hast thou shown indeed a valiant soul,

But soon a thing most horrible will try it.

Stoutly men now and later will deny it.

Inscribe it truly in thy protocol.

Herald [grasping the staff which PLUTUS keeps in his hand].

The dwarfs lead Pan, the great god, nigher,

5920

Quite gently, to the well of fire.

It seethes up from the deepest maw,

Then down again the flames withdraw,

And gloomy gapes the open jaw.

The foam and flame roll up again.

5925

Complacent doth Great Pan remain,

Rejoicing in the wondrous sight,

While pearls of foam spurt left and right.

How can he in such wizardry confide?

He stoops down low to look inside.—

5930

But now his beard is falling in!—

Whose can it be, that beardless chin?

His hand conceals it from our gaze.—

A great mishap is taking place.

The beard flies backward, all ablaze,

5935

And kindles wreath and head and breast;

Turned into sorrow is the jest.—

To quench the fire they race and run,

But free from flames there is not one,

And as they slap and beat it too,

5940

They only stir up flames anew;

In fiery flames entangled, caught,

A maskers' group is burned to naught.

But hark! what news is spreading here

From mouth to mouth, from ear to ear!

5945

O evermore ill-fated Night,

How thou hast turned our bliss to blight!

Tomorrow morn will everywhere

Proclaim what no one likes to hear.

Yet everywhere I'll hear the cry:

5950

"The Emperor suffers agony!"

Oh, would that something else were true!

The Emperor burns, his escort too.

Accursed who led him so astray,

Who bound about them resined spray,

5955

Raging around with boisterous song,

Bringing to ruin all the throng.

O Youth, O Youth, and wilt thou never

Keep within proper bounds thy pleasure?

O Highness, Highness, wilt thou never

5960

Use might and reason in due measure?

The mimic woods are catching fire,

The tongues of flame lick higher, higher,

Where netted rafters interlace;

A fiery doom threatens all the place.

5965

Now overflows our cup of woe,

And who shall save us I don't know.

The ashes of a night will be

All that was once rich majesty.

Plutus. Terror has enough been spread,

5970

Let us now bring help instead!

Strike, thou hallowed staff, the ground

Till earth quiver and resound!

Fill thyself, O spacious air,

With cool fragrance everywhere.

5975

Hither come, around us streaming,

Mist and clouds with moisture teeming,

Come and veil the rampant flame;

Cloudlets, whirl ye, drizzling, purl ye,

Hither glide ye, softly drenching,

5980

Quelling everywhere and quenching;

Ye, who're moist, allaying, bright'ning,

Change to harmless summer lightning

All this empty fiery game!

And when spirits threat and lower,

5985

Then let Magic show its power!

PLEASURE GARDEN

MORNING SUN

EMPEROR. COURTIER.

FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES, *dressed becomingly, not conspicuously, according to the mode; both kneel.*

Faust. Pardon you, Sire, the flames and wizardry?

Emperor [beckoning him to rise].

Many such pleasantries I would like to see.

Presto! I stood within a glowing zone,

It seemed almost Pluto and I were one.

5990

In coal-black night and yet with fires aglow

Lay an abyss. From many a vent below

Thousands of savage flames were upward whirling,

Into a single vault above me swirling,

Licking their tongues of flame against the dome's far height

5995

Which now appeared and now was lost to sight.

Far, far away, through spiral shafts of flame

Peoples I saw, in moving files they came,

In a wide circle pressing on and on

And paying homage as they've always done.

6000

Courtiers I recognized amid the splendour,

I seemed a prince over many a salamander.

Mephistopheles. That are you, Sire, since every element

Doth own you absolute to all intent.

Obedient have you now proved fire to be.

6005

Where waves heave wildest, leap into the sea!

The pearl-strewn bottom you will scarcely tread

Ere a glorious billowing dome forms overhead.

You'll see there light-green rolling billows swelling,

Their edges purple, forming the fairest dwelling

6010

Round you, the centre. Wander at your will,

The palaces attend you even still.

The very walls rejoice in life, in teeming,

Arrowy swarming, hither, thither streaming.

Sea-wonders push and dart along to win

6015

The new soft glow but none may enter in.

The dragons, mottled, golden-scaled, are playing;

There gapes the shark but you laugh at his baying.

Though now the court surrounds you in delight,

Still such a throng has never met your sight.

6020

Yet long you're not deprived of forms endearing;

The Nereids come curiously nearing

Your splendid palace in the cool of ocean,

The young with fish-like, shy, and wanton motion,

The old ones prudent. Thetis learns of this,

6025

Gives her new Peleus hand and mouth to kiss.—

The seat, then, on Olympus' wide domain . . .

Emperor. Over the air I leave to you to reign;

Quite soon enough does one ascend that throne.

Mephistopheles. Earth, Lord Supreme, already is your own.

6030

Emperor. What brought you here to ravish us with sights

Directly out of the Arabian Nights?

If like Scheherazade you are inventive,

Be sure of every favour and incentive.

Be near whenever—as is oft the case—

6035

I grutch at this poor world of commonplace.

Steward [enters in haste]. Ah, Most Serene, in all my life I never

Thought I could give you news of such high favour

As this which richly blesses me

And drives me here almost in ecstasy.

6040

Bill upon bill has now been squared,

The usurers' talons have been pared.

From hellish worry I am free!

In Heaven life can not happier be.

Commander-in-Chief [follows in haste].

Arrears are paid as they were due

6045

And all the army's pledged anew;

The soldier feels his blood made over.

Landlords and wenches are in clover.

Emperor. How free you breathe, with breasts so lightened!

Your wrinkled foreheads, how they're brightened!

6050

How you come in with eager speed!

Treasurer [appears]. Inquire of these who did the deed.

Faust. It's for the Chancellor to tell the story.

Chancellor [approaching slowly].

I'm blessed enough now when I'm old and hoary.

So hear and see the fateful, solemn leaf

6055

Which into joy has transformed all our grief.

He reads.

"To all whom it concerns, let it be known:

Who hath this note, a thousand crowns doth own.

As certain pledge thereof shall stand

Vast buried treasure in the Emperor's land.

6060

Provision has been made that ample treasure,

Raised straightway, shall redeem the notes at pleasure."

Emperor. I sense a crime, a monstrous, cheating lure!

Who dared to forge the Emperor's signature?

Is still unpunished such a breach of right?

6065

Treasurer. Remember, Sire, yourself it was last night

That signed the note. You stood as mighty Pan,

The Chancellor came and spoke in words that ran:

"A lofty festal joy do for thyself attain:

Thy people's weal—a few strokes of the pen!"

6070

These did you make, then thousand-fold last night

Conjurors multiplied what you did write;

And that straightway the good might come to all,

We stamped at once the series, large and small;

Tens, twenties, thirties, hundreds, all are there.

6075

You can not think how glad the people were.

Behold your city, once half-dead, decaying,

Now full of life and joy, and swarming, playing!

Although your name has blessed the world of yore,

So gladly was it never seen before.

6080

The alphabet is really now redundant;

In this sign each is saved to bliss abundant.

Emperor. My people take it for good gold, you say?

In camp, in court, sufficient as full pay?

Although amazed, still I must give assent.

6085

Steward. The flight of notes we could nowise prevent;

Like lightning notes were scattered on the run.

The changers' shops open wide to everyone;

And there all notes are honoured, high and low,

With gold and silver—at a discount, though.

6090

From there to butcher, baker, tavern hasting,

One-half the world seems thinking but of feasting,

The other in new raiment struts and crows;

The draper cuts the cloth, the tailor sews.

In cellars "Long live the Emperor!" is the toasting;

6095

There platters clatter, there they're boiling, roasting.

Mephistopheles. Who all alone will down the terrace stray

Perceives the fairest in superb array;

With her proud peacock-fan she hides one eye

And looking for a note goes simpering by;

6100

More swiftly than through eloquence and wit

Love's richest favour can be gained by it.

With purse and scrip one is no longer harried.

A notelet in one's breast is lightly carried;

With billets-doux quite snugly will it nestle.

6105

The priest bears it devoutly in his missal.

The soldier, that he may the faster haste,

Lightens the girdle quickly round his waist.

Pardon, Your Majesty, if I may seem

To mete a lofty work but slight esteem.

6110

Faust. Treasures in superfluity still sleep

Within your borders, buried deep,

And lie unused. Thought in its widest measure

Gives the most meagre bounds to such a treasure.

Imagination in its highest flight,

Strain as it may, can't soar to such a height.

6115

Yet spirits, fit to fathom the unsounded,

Have boundless confidence in the unbounded.

Mephistopheles. Nor gold nor pearls are half as handy as

Such paper. Then a man knows what he has.

6120

There is no need of higgling or exchanging;

In love and wine one can at will be ranging.

If you want metal, changers are at hand;

If lacking there, dig for a while the land.

Goblet and chain are auctioned off and sold;

6125

Paper redeemed without delay in gold

Confounds the doubter who had scoffed and taunted.

This men demand, to metals they are wonted.

Ready at hand the Emperor's realm will hold

Henceforth enough of paper, jewels, gold.

6130

Emperor. Our realm owes you this great prosperity;

As is the service, the reward should be.

Our empire's soil be trusted to your care,

The worthiest guardians of the treasures there.

You know the vast and well-preserved hoard,

6135

And when men dig, it's you must give the word.

Become as one, ye masters of our treasure,

Fulfil your stations' dignities with pleasure

Here where in blest accord and unity

The upper and the lower world agree.

6140

Treasurer. Twixt us no slightest strife shall cause division;

I love to have as colleague the magician.

Exit with FAUST.

Emperor. If now I shall endow each man of you,

Let each confess what use he'll put it to.

A Page [receiving]. I'll joy to live, be glad and gay.

6145

Another Page [likewise]. My love shall have a chain and rings
today.

A Chamberlain [accepting].

Wine twice as good shall henceforth down me trickle.

Another Chamberlain [likewise]. I feel the dice inside my pocket
tickle.

A Banneret [thoughtfully]. From debt I'll make my lands and castle
free.

Another Banneret [likewise]. I'll add this treasure to my treasury. 6150

Emperor. I hoped for joy and heart for new emprise,

But knowing you one can your course surmise.

Well do I see, with all this treasure-store

You still remain just as you were before.

Fool [approaching]. You're scattering favours, grant me some, I
pray.

6155

Emperor. Alive again? You'd soon drink them away.

Fool. The magic leaves! I don't quite comprehend—

Emperor. Of course, for you'd put them to some bad end.

Fool. Still more drop there, I don't know what to do.

Emperor. Just pick them up, I let them fall for you.

6160

Exit.

Fool. Five thousand crowns are mine? How unexpected!

Mephistopheles. Two-leggèd wineskin, are you resurrected?

Fool. That happens oft but like this never yet.

Mephistopheles. You are so glad you're breaking out in sweat.

Fool. Is that the same as cash? Look, are you sure?

6165

Mephistopheles. What throat and belly want it will procure.

Fool. And cattle can I buy and house and land?

Mephistopheles. Of course! Just bid and they will be at hand.

Fool. Castle with wood, chase, fish-brook?

Mephistopheles.

On my word!

I'd like to see you as a stern Milord!

6170

Fool. Tonight a landed owner I shall sit!

Exit.

Mephistopheles [solus]. Who still will have a doubt of our fool's wit?

A DARK GALLERY

FAUST. MEPHISTOPHELES.

Mephistopheles. Why draw me into this dark gallery?

Is not in there enough of sport,

Enough of fun and fraud and raillery

6175

Amid the crowded motley of the court?

Faust. Don't speak of tricks! Your jests are old and hoary;

Down to the very soles you've worn that story;

But now you're going to and fro to flee

From having any talk with me.

6180

I am tormented further things to do;

The Chamberlain is urging and the Steward too.

The Emperor orders—straightway must it be—

Both Helena and Paris will he see,

Of man and woman in their true ideal

6185

Demands to see the forms distinct and real.

To work! I gave my word—I must not break it.

Mephistopheles. A foolish promise—fool you were to make it.

Faust. Whither your powers lead us, friend,

You have not well reflected;

6190

We first have made him rich—no end!

Now to amuse him we're expected.

Mephistopheles. You fancy these things easy to arrange.

Here where we stand, the steps are steeper.

You grapple with a realm most strange,

6195

And wantonly will plunge in debt still deeper.

You think that Helena is summoned here

As quickly as the paper spectres were.

With witches' witchery and ghostly ghost,

With changeling dwarfs I'm ready at my post;

6200

But devils' darlings, though one may not flout them,

As heroines no one goes mad about them.

Faust. There you go harping on the same old chord!

Into uncertainty you always lead us,

Sire of all hindrances that can impede us;

6205

For each new help you want a new reward.

Mutter a little and the deed is done;

She will be here ere I can turn me.

Mephistopheles. The heathen-folk do not concern me.

They occupy a hell that's all their own.

6210

But help there is.

Faust. Quick! Tell its history!

Mephistopheles. Not glad do I reveal a loftier mystery—

Enthroned sublime in solitude are goddesses;

Around them is no place, a time still less;

To speak of them embarrasses.

6215

They are the *Mothers!*

Faust [terrified]. Mothers!

Mephistopheles. Do you fear?

Faust. The Mothers! Mothers! Strange the word I hear.

Mephistopheles. Strange is it. Goddesses, to men unknown,

Whom we are loath to name or own.

Deep must you dig to reach their dwelling ever;

6220

You are to blame that now we need their favour.

Faust. Whither the way?

Mephistopheles. No way! To the Unexplorable,

Never to be explored; to the Unimplorable,

Never to be implored. Are in the mood?

There are no locks, no bars are to be given;

6225

Through solitudes you will be whirled and driven.

Can you imagine wastes and solitude?

Faust. I think that you might save yourself such chatter;

It savours of the witch's-kitchen patter

After a long, long interlude.

6230

Was I not forced to live with men?

Learn the inane, teach the inane?

If I spoke wisely, true to my conviction,

Then doubly loud resounded contradiction.

Indeed, from mankind, so perversely given,

6235

To solitude and deserts I was driven;

Till not to be too lone and all-forsaken,

At last to devil's company I've taken.

Mephistopheles. And had you swum to ocean's farthest verge

And utter boundlessness beheld,

6240

Still yonder you'd have seen surge upon surge;

Although impending doom your fear compelled,

You'd have seen *something*. Dolphins you'd have seen

Cleaving the hushed ocean's emerald-green,

Have seen the moving clouds, sun, moon, and star.

6245

Naught will you see in that vast Void afar,

Nor hear your footstep when it's pressed,

Nor find firm ground where you can rest.

Faust. You speak as of all mystagogues the chief,

Whoever brought trustful neophytes to grief;

6250

Only reversed. Into the Void I'm sent,

That art and power I may there augment.

You treat me like the cat's-paw you desire

To snatch the chestnuts for you from the fire.

Come, let us fathom it, whatever may befall.

6255

In this your Naught I hope to find my All.

Mephistopheles. I praise you, truly, ere you part from me,
Since that you understand the Devil I can see.

Here, take this key.

Faust. That tiny, little thing!

Mephistopheles. Seize and esteem it, see what it may bring! 6260

Faust. It's growing in my hand! it flashes, glows!

Mephistopheles. Will you see now what blessing it bestows?

The key will scent the right place from all others;

Follow it down, 'twill lead you to the Mothers.

Faust [*shuddering*]. The Mothers! Like a blow it strikes my ear! 6265

What is that word that I don't like to hear?

Mephistopheles. So narrow-minded, scared by each new word?

Will you but hear what you've already heard?

Let naught disturb you, though it strangely rings,

You! long since wonted to most wondrous things. 6270

Faust. And yet in torpor there's no gain for me;

The thrill of awe is man's best quality.

Although the world may stifle every sense,

Enthralled, man deeply senses the Immense.

Mephistopheles. Descend, then! I might also tell you: Soar! 6275

It's all the same. Escape from the Existent

To phantoms' unbound realms far distant!

Delight in what long since exists no more!

Like filmy clouds the phantoms glide along.

Brandish the key, hold off the shadowy throng. 6280

Faust [*inspired*]. Good! Gripping it, I feel new strength arise,

My breast expands. On, to the great emprise!

Mephistopheles. When you at last a glowing tripod see,

Then in the deepest of all realms you'll be.

You'll see the Mothers in the tripod's glow, 6285

Some of them sitting, others stand and go,

As it may chance. Formation, transformation,

Eternal Mind's eternal re-creation.

Images of all creatures hover free,

They will not see you, only wraiths they see. 6290

So, then, take courage, for the danger's great.

Go to that tripod, do not hesitate,

And touch it with the key!

FAUST assumes a decidedly commanding attitude with the key.

Mephistopheles [*observing him*]. So—it is well!

'Twill come and like a slave obey your spell.

Calmly you'll rise, upborne by fortune rare, 6295

And have the tripod here ere they're aware.

And when you've brought it hither, you can cite

Hero and heroine from the realms of night,

The first to face that deed and venture on it.

It's done and you're the one who will have done it.

6300

Then must the incense-cloud, by magic hand,

Turn into gods, as gods before you stand.

Faust. And now what?

Mephistopheles. Downward let your being strain!

Stamping, sink hence and, stamping, rise again!

FAUST stamps and sinks out of sight.

Mephistopheles. I only hope he'll profit from the key!

6305

Will he come back? I'm curious to see.

BRIGHTLY LIGHTED HALLS

EMPEROR and PRINCES.

The Court moving about.

Chamberlain [to MEPHISTOPHELES].

The spirit-scene you promised still is owing.

To work! Impatient is our master growing.

Steward. A moment since His Grace inquired of me.

Delay not! Don't disgrace His Majesty!

6310

Mephistopheles. Upon that errand has my comrade gone;

He surely knows what's to be done.

He works secludedly and still,

And all his powers he perforce engages.

Who'd raise that treasure, Beauty, at his will,

6315

Requires the highest art, Magic of Sages!

Steward. The kind of arts you need, that is all one;

It is the Emperor's will that it be done.

A Blonde [to MEPHISTOPHELES].

One word, sir! See my face without a spot,

But thus in tiresome summer it is not!

6320

Then brownish-red there sprout a hundred freckles

Which vex my lily skin with ugly speckles.

A cure!

Mephistopheles. You radiant darling, what a pity,

Spotted in May-time like a panther-kitty.

Take frog-spawn, toads' tongues, cohobate¹ them,

6325

And carefully, at full moon, distillate them.

When the moon's waning, spread the mixture on,

And when the spring has come, the spots are gone.

A Brunette. To fawn around you, see the crowd advancing!

I beg a remedy! A chilblained foot

6330

Hinders me much in walking and in dancing

And makes me awkward even when I salute.

Mephistopheles. Pray let me tread upon it with my foot.

Brunette. Well, I suppose that happens between lovers.

Mephistopheles. In my tread, child, a greater meaning
hovers.

6335

¹Distil repeatedly.

Like unto like, whatever pain one undergol

Foot healeth foot, so is it with each member.

Come here! Give heed! Don't *you* tread *me*, remember!

Brunette [screaming]. Oh, how that stings! you did tread hard!

Oh! Oh!

'Twas like a horse's hoof.

Mephistopheles. With this cure you can go.

6340

Dance to your heart's content, now you are able,

Or foot it with your sweetheart 'neath the table.

Lady [pressing forward]. Let me go through! Too painful are my sorrows;

Deep in my heart this anguish burns and burrows.

Till yesterday his bliss hung on *my* glances

6345

But now he turns his back; only *her* talk entrances.

Mephistopheles. That's serious, but listen carefully.

Press up to him quite softly, take

This bit of charcoal, and then on him make

A mark on sleeve or cloak or shoulder as may be;

6350

Remorse will pierce him to the very core.

'The coal, however, you must straightway swallow,

Nor let a drop of wine or water follow;

Tonight you'll have him sighing at your door.

Lady. It is not poison, is it?

Mephistopheles [indignant]. Respect where it is due!

6355

For such a coal you'd travel many a mile;

It comes here from a funeral pile

Such as whose flames we once more fiercely blew.

Page. I am in love, they do not take me seriously.

Mephistopheles [aside]. Whom I am now to listen to, I do not see.

6360

To the *PAGE*.

Let not the youngest maid your fancy fetter;

Those on in years know how to prize you better.

Others crowd up.

Still more and more? It is a brawl, in sooth!

I'll help myself at last with naked truth,

The worst of aids! Great is my misery.—

6365

O Mothers, Mothers! Do let Faust go free!

Gazing around him.

The lights are burning dimly in the hall,

At once the Court starts forward, one and all.

I see them file according to their grades

Through distant galleries and long arcades.

6370

Now they're assembling in that ample space,

The old Knight's Hall; yet hardly all find place.

The spacious walls with tapestries are rich,

While armour decorates each nook and niche.

Here is no need, methinks, of magic incantation,

6375

Ghosts will come here without an invitation.

HALL OF THE KNIGHTS

Dim illumination. The EMPEROR and Court have entered.

Herald. Mine ancient office of announcing plays
Is marred by spirits' mystic interference;
In vain one dares in reasonable ways
To fathom their mysterious appearance. 6380
The chairs are placed, the seats are ready all;
The Emperor is seated just before the wall;
Upon the arras there he may with ease behold
The glorious battles that men fought of old.
Now Emperor and Court are seated here; 6385
The benches crowd together in the rear;
And lovers in this spirit-hour's uncanny gloom
Have found beside their loved ones lovely room.
And so, since all have duly taken places,
We're ready, let the spirits come and face us! 6390

Trumpets.

Astrologer. Now let the drama start without delay.
Our Sire commands! Ye walls, give way!
Naught hinders now. Here magic doth conspire;
The arras rolls away as if by fire.
The wall is splitting, turning in the gloom, 6395
A deep stage seems to be appearing,
A light mysterious to be nearing,
And I ascend to the proscenium.

Mephistopheles [*rising to view in the prompter's box*]
I hope for favour here from all and each,
For promptings are the Devil's art of speech. 6400
To the ASTROLOGER.

You know the tempo of the stars on high;
You'll understand my whispering masterly.

Astrologer. By magic might before us doth appear,
Massive enough, an ancient temple here.
Like Atlas who upheld the sky of old, 6405
Columns enough, in rows, you can behold.
Well for the weight of stone may they suffice,
Since two could bear a mighty edifice.

Architect. So that's antique! I can't say I would praise it;
Top heavy, clumsy, is the way to phrase it. 6410
Rude is called noble, awkward great; far more
I love slim shafts that boundless soar.
High pointed arches lift the soul on high,
Such edifices most do edify.

Astrologer. Receive with reverent awe star-granted hours 6415
By magic's spells enthralled be Reason's powers,
And in its stead, arising far and free,

Reign glorious, daring Phantasy!

What you desired so boldly, be it now perceived;

It is impossible, therefore to be believed.

6420

FAUST rises to view on the other side of the proscenium.

Astrologer. In priestly robe and wreathed, a wonder-man!

Who'll now fulfil what he in faith began,

A tripod with him from the depths below.

Now from the bowl the incense-perfumes flow.

He girds himself, the lofty work to bless;

6425

Henceforth there can be nothing but success.

Faust [in the grand manner].

In your name, Mothers! ye who have your throne

In boundless space, eternally alone,

Yet not alone. Around your heads there waver

Life's images, astir, yet lifeless ever.

6430

What once has been, in radiance supernal,

It's stirring there, for it would be eternal,

And ye allot it, Powers who all things sway,

To vaulted night, to canopy of day.

On some the lovely stream of life lays hold,

6435

Others are sought by the magician bold;

Boldly in rich profusion he displays

The marvel whereon each would like to gaze.

Astrologer. The glowing key doth scarcely touch the bowl,

Over the prospect misty vapours roll;

6440

They creep along, then cloud-like on they fare,

Spread out, round off, entwine, they part, they pair.

Now note a mystic masterpiece! For lo!

The vaporous clouds make music as they go.

Aerial tones bring forth—what can it be?

6445

While they proceed, all turns to melody.

The columned shaft, the very triglyph, rings;

Yea, I believe that all the temple sings.

The mist is sinking; from the filmy haze

A handsome youth steps forth with measured pace.

6450

Here ends my task, I do not need to name him;

As gentle Paris who would not proclaim him?

PARIS steps forth.

A Lady. What glorious, blooming youth and strength I see!

A Second Lady. Fresh as a peach, as full of juice, is he!

A Third Lady. The finely chiselled, sweetly swelling lip!

6455

A Fourth Lady. From such a cup how would you like to sip?

A Fifth Lady. He's handsome, yes, and yet not quite refined.

A Sixth Lady. A bit more graceful might he be, I find.

A Knight. I think I see him when a shepherd boy. He's wearing

No traces of a prince and naught of courtly bearing.

6460

Another Knight. Oh, well! Half nude the youth is fair to look upon,

But we must see him with his armour on.

A Lady. He seats him gently and with easy grace.

A Knight. You'd find his lap, perchance, a pleasant place?

Another Lady. He lays his arm so lightly over his head. 6465

A Chamberlain. That's not allowed! How thoroughly ill-bred!

A Lady. You lords can always find some fault to cavil at.

Chamberlain. Before the very Emperor to stretch himself like that!

A Lady. He's only playing, thinks he's quite alone.

Chamberlain. A play too should be courteous near the throne. 6470

A Lady. Sleep captures now the charming youth completely!

Chamberlain. And now he'll snore, quite properly and meetly!

A Young Lady [*enraptured*].

What fragrance with the incense-stream is blending,
Refreshment to my inmost bosom sending!

An Older Lady. A zephyr pierces deep into my soul, in truth! 6475
It comes from him.

A Very Old Lady. It is the bloom of youth,
Ambrosia-like within the boy distilling
And all the atmosphere around us filling.

HELENA *appears*.

Mephistopheles. So that is she! She'd not disturb my rest;
Pretty indeed, but still I'm not impressed. 6480

Astrophologist. For me right now there's nothing more to do;
I see and honourably confess it true.

The Fair One comes, and had I tongues of fire!—
Always did Beauty many songs inspire.

Who sees her is enrapt! and far too blessed 6485

For human lot the man who her possessed.

Faust. Have I still eyes? Is Beauty's spring, outpouring,
Revealed most richly to my inmost soul?

My dread path brought me to this loftiest goal!
Void was the world and barred to my exploring! 6490

What is it now since this my priesthood's hour?

Worth wishing for, firm-based, a lasting dower!

Vanish from me my every vital power

If I forsake thee, treacherous to my duty!

The lovely form that once my fancy captured, 6495

That in the magic glass enraptured,

Was but a foam-born phantom of such beauty!—

To thee alone I render up with gladness

The very essence of my passion,

Fancy, desire, love, worship, madness! 6500

Mephistopheles [*from the prompter's box*].

Be calm! Don't drop your role in such a fashion!

An Elderly Lady. Tall, well-formed, but her head's too small for me.

A Fairly Young Lady. Just see her foot! How could it clumsier be?

A Diplomat. I have seen princesses of this same kind!

She's beautiful from head to foot, I find.

6505

A Courtier. She nears the sleeper, cunningly demure.

- A Lady.* How hideous by that form so young and pure!
A Poet. By her rare beauty he is beamed upon.
A Lady. A picture! Luna and Endymion!
A Poet. Quite right! and now the goddess seems to sink, 6510
 Bends over him as if his breath to drink.
 How enviable!—A kiss!—The cup is full.
A Duenna. Before the crowd! My word! That is too cool.
Faust. A fearful favour for the youth!
Mephistopheles. Be still!
 And let the phantom do all that it will. 6515
A Courtier. She steals away, light-footed. He awakes.
A Lady. Just as I thought, another look she takes.
A Courtier. He is astounded, thinks a wonder doth occur.
A Lady. But what she sees, no wonder is to her.
A Courtier. She turns around to him with charming grace. 6520
A Lady. I see, she'll take him now into her school;
 Stupid is every man in such a case.
 He thinks, I guess, that he's the first—the fool!
A Knight. She'll pass with me! A fine, majestic air!
A Lady. The courtesan! How vulgar, I declare! 6525
A Page. Where he is now, oh, would that I were there!
A Courtier. In such a net who would not fain be caught?
A Lady. Through many hands has gone that jewel rare;
 Even the gilding's rather worse for wear.
Another Lady. From her tenth year she has been good for naught.¹ 6530
A Knight. Each makes the best his own as chance obtains;
 I'd be contented with these fair remains.
A Dryasdust Scholar. I see her plainly and yet, frankly, I can see
 That one may doubt if she the right one be.
 What's present always causes obfuscation; 6535
 I like to cling to written attestation.
 And there I read that, soon as she was sighted,
 The Trojan greybeards² all were most delighted.
 Methinks, that fits the case here perfectly.
 I am not young and yet she pleases me. 6540
Astrologer. A youth no more! A man, heroic, brave,
 Embraces her who scarce herself can save.
 Strong-armed, he lifts her high in air.
 Will he, then, bear her off?
Faust. Rash fool, beware!
 You dare? You hear not? Halt! It is too much! 6545
Mephistopheles. Why, this mad phantom-play, you've made it such!
Astrologer. But one word more! From all we've seen today,
 I call the piece *The Rape of Helena*.
Faust. What! "Rape"? Fellow, am I for naught here?

¹That is, from the time Theseus is said to have fallen in love with her and to have carried her off.

²Cf. *Iliad*, iii. 156-8.

This key do I not hold it in my hand, 6550

I whom through stormy solitudes it brought here,

Through waves of horror to this solid land?

Here do I plant my foot! Realities are here,

Here strife with spirits may the spirit dare

And for itself the great twin-realm prepare. 6555

Though she was far, how can she nearer be?

I'll save her and then doubly mine is she.

I dare! Ye Mothers, Mothers! grant this favour!

Who once has known her can renounce her never!

Astrologer. What are you doing, Faustus, Faustus! With what might 6560

He seizes her! The form is fading from our sight.

Toward the youth he turns the key, and lo!

He's touching him!—Now! it is done! Ah, woe on woe!

*Explosion. FAUST lies on the ground. The phantoms dissolve in
vapour.*

Mephistopheles [taking FAUST on his shoulder].

So there it is! To deal with fools is evil

And in the end it even harms the Devil.

6565

Darkness, tumult.

ACT II

A HIGH-VAULTED, NARROW, GOTHIC CHAMBER

FORMERLY FAUST'S, UNALTERED

Mephistopheles [appears from behind a curtain. As he raises the curtain and looks back, FAUST is seen stretched out on an old-fashioned bed].

Lie there, poor wretch! seduced, unwise,
Scarce to be rescued from Love's chain!
Whom Helena doth paralyze,
His reason he'll not soon regain.

Looking around him.

I look around and through the glimmer 6570
Unchanged, uninjured all appears;

Methinks the coloured window-panes are dimmer,
The cobwebs have increased with years.

The ink is dry, the paper brown and sere,

Yet all is in its place, in very fact; 6575

Even the pen's still lying here

Which Faust used when he signed the pact.

Aye, deeper in the pen is lurking still

A trace of blood I lured him on to spill.

To find a relic so unique as this 6580

Would be some great collector's highest bliss.

From its old hook the old fur coat's half falling,

Those merry jests of mine recalling

Which once I taught that lad as truth,

Which still may nourish his ingenuous youth. 6585

Rough, fur-warm cloak, encased in you,

A great desire comes on me truly

To show off as a proud professor newly,

As men think they've a perfect right to do.

The learned know how to attain that level;

It is an art long since lost by the Devil. 6590

*He shakes the fur coat which he has taken down. Crickets,
beetles, and moths fly out.*

Chorus of Insects.

Hail! welcome thy coming,

Thou patron of yore!

We're flying and humming

And know thee once more. 6595

All singly, in quiet,

Didst plant us, and lo!

In thousands, O Father,

We dance to and fro.
 The rogue in the bosom 6600
 Is deeply concealed;
 The insects in fur coats
 Are sooner revealed.

Mephistopheles. With what surprising joy this youthful brood I
 view!

Aye, only sow, you'll harvest when the time is due. 6605

I'll give the old fur coat a second clout;

Still here and there another flutters out.

Up and about, ye darlings, helter-skelter,

And quickly in a thousand nooks seek shelter:

Where ancient pasteboard boxes stand, 6610

In yellowed parchment here at hand,

Where dusty shards of old pots lie,

In yonder death's-head's hollow eye.

Amid such trash and mouldering life

Crickets and crotchets must be rife. 6615

He slips into the fur coat.

Come, cloak my shoulders as of yore,

Head of the house as heretofore.

Yet boots it little so to name me;

Where are the people to acclaim me?

*He pulls the bell which gives out a shrill, penetrating sound,
 making the halls tremble and the doors fly open.*

Famulus [tottering down the long, dark corridor].

What a clanging! What a quaking! 6620

Stairs are rocking, walls are shaking!

Through the windows' motley quiver

I see summer lightning shiver.

Over me cracks the ancient flooring,

Down come lime and rubbish pouring; 6625

And the door, securely bolted,

Magic power has open jolted.

There! How terrible! A giant

Stands in Faust's old fur, defiant!

At his look, his beck, his winking, 6630

On my knees I'm near to sinking.

Shall I stay? or shall I flee?

Oh, what will become of me?

Mephistopheles [beckoning].

Come here, my friend! Your name is Nicodemus.¹

Famulus. Most worthy sir! That is my name—Oremus. 6635

Mephistopheles. That we'll omit!

Famulus. You know me! What a thrill!

Mephistopheles. I know you well, old and a student still,

Moss-covered sir! Also a learned man

¹Cf. John, 3. 1-21.

Still studies on since there's naught else he can.

A moderate house of cards one builds him so;

6640

The greatest mind does not complete it, though.

And yet your master! Great his gifts and fame;

Who does not know good Doctor Wagner's name?

First in the learned world! 'Tis he alone, they say,

Who holds the world together; every day

6645

He proves that he is wisdom's multiplier.

Hearers and listeners who eagerly aspire

To universal knowledge, round him flock.

None from the rostrum can shine meeter;

He handles keys as doth St. Peter;

6650

Lower and Upper, both he can unlock.¹

Like his—as Wagner glows and sparkles—

No other's fame can hold its ground.

The very name of Faustus darkles;

Wagner alone has sought and found.

6655

Famulus. Pardon, good sir, for asking your attention

The while I make an humble intervention:

With what you've said there can be no dissension,

But modesty is his allotted part.

Since that great man's mysterious disappearing

6660

He knows not where to turn in his despairing;

For Faust's return he prays with all his heart,

And thence for weal and solace. None may enter

The room which Doctor Faustus left. Forlorn,

Untouched, it waits its lord's return.

6665

To enter it I scarcely dare to venture.

What aspect of the stars must now appear?

It seemed to me as if the stout walls quivered,

The door-posts trembled, bolts were shivered,

Else you yourself could not have come in here.

6670

Mephistopheles. Where has the man gone? Where is he?

Lead me to him! Bring him to me!

Famulus. Ah, sir! Too strict his orders are a bit,

I know not if I dare to venture it.

Month after month to great work he's been giving,

6675

In stillest stillness he's been living.

The daintiest of men of learning

Looks now as if he had been charcoal-burning,

His face all black from ears to nose,

His eyes all red from flames he blows.

6680

Each moment for the next he longs;

His music is the clang of tongs.

Mephistopheles. And shall he entrance now deny me?

I'll speed his luck—just let him try me!

FAMULUS goes out, MEPHISTOPHELES sits down gravely.

¹Cf. Matthew, 16. 19.

Scarce am I settled here at rest,
 When yonder stirs a well-known guest.
 But now most up-to-date is he;
 He'll brag and swagger boundlessly.

6685

Bachelor of Arts [storming along the corridor].

Gate and door I find are op'ning!
 Well, at least one can be hoping
 That no more in mould unfitting
 Men alive, yet dead, are sitting,
 Pining, rotting, mortifying,
 And of living still be dying.

6690

Here each wall and each partition
 Bends down, sinking to perdition.
 If we hence don't soon betake us,
 Ruin dire will overtake us.
 I am bold, no one can match me,
 Yet no farther will one catch me.

6700

But today what am I learning!
 Many years ago, a yearning
 Freshman, I came hither, fluttering,
 Anxious and abashed and stuttering.
 Here I trusted long-beards' tattle,
 Edified me on their prattle.

6705

Into heavy, dry tomes reaching,
 What they knew they lied in teaching,
 Taught without themselves believing,
 Me, themselves, of life bereaving.

6710

What! there in the cell off yonder,
 Dimly-lit, one sits asunder!
 Stranger still, as I draw nearer,
 Sits he there, the brown fur-wearer,
 As I left him, piece for piece,
 Still in that old shaggy fleece!
 Subtle then he seemed to be,
 Not yet understood by me,
 But today 'twill not avail him.
 Up and on now to assail him!

6720

If, ancient sir, your bald head, sideways bending,
 Has into Lethe's dreary waters not been drawn,
 Acknowledge now your pupil hither wending
 Who academic rods has quite outgrown.
 I find you still as then when I began;
 But I am here again, another man!

6725

Mephistopheles. I'm glad I brought you with my tinkling.
 The other time I valued you quite high;
 Even in the worm, the chrysalis, an inkling
 Is of the future, gaily-coloured butterfly.

6730

Curls and a fine lace-collar wearing,
 You showed a child-like pleasure in your bearing.
 I guess you never wore a queue?
 I see, today cropped like a Swede are you.
 You look quite brave and resolute,
 But pray don't go home absolute.

6735

Bachelor of Arts.

Old sir! there on the same old desk you're leaning,
 But think how time runs on today
 And spare your words of double meaning;
 We watch now in a very different way.
 Then with an honest stripling you were toying,
 Succeeded too, but little art employing.
 Today no one will venture that, in sooth.

6740

Mephistopheles. If, unadulterate, one says to youth

What does not please the callow brood—the truth!
 And later after many a tide
 They learn it painfully on their own hide,
 Each fancies then it came from his own head;
 "The Master was a fool!" is what is said.

6745

Bachelor of Arts.

Or rogue perhaps! What teacher has the grace
 To tell the truth directly to our face?
 To simple children each knows what to say,
 Add or subtract, now grave, now wise and gay.

6750

Mephistopheles. There is, indeed, a time to learn;

You're ready now to teach, as I discern.
 For many a moon and now and then a sun
 A rich experience you have doubtless won.

6755

Bachelor of Arts. Experience! Mere foam and fluff!

A peer of mind? No trace of that is showing.
 Confess: what men have ever known is stuff
 And absolutely not worth knowing . . .

6760

Mephistopheles [after a pause].

I long have thought so, but I was a fool;
 Now to myself I seem right flat and dull.

Bachelor of Arts. Good! That has a reasonable sound;

A greybeard talking sense at last is found!

6765

Mephistopheles. I sought a hidden treasure, one of gold;

'Twas hideous coals when all my search was done.

Bachelor of Arts. Confess it then! Your skull, now bald and old,

Is worth no more than yonder hollow one.

Mephistopheles [good-humouredly].

You're ruder, friend, perhaps than you mean quite.

6770

Bachelor of Arts. In German people lie when they're polite.

Mephistopheles [moving nearer and nearer toward the proscenium in his wheeled-chair, to the spectators].

Here I'm deprived of light and air. I wonder

Could I find refuge with you people yonder?

Bachelor of Arts. It is presumption that men old and hoar

Seek to be something when they are no more.

6775

Man's life lives in his blood and where, forsooth,

Does blood so stir as in the veins of youth?

Ah, that is living blood, with vigour rife,

Creating newer life from its own life.

There all is stirring, there is something done,

6780

The weak fall out, the capable press on.

While half the world we've brought beneath our sway,

What have you done? Thought, nodded, dreamed away,

Considered plan on plan—and nothing won.

It's certain! Age is but an ague cold,

6785

Chill with its fancies of distress and dread.

Once a man's thirty, he's already old,

He is indeed as good as dead.

'Twere best to kill him right away.

Mephistopheles. The Devil, here, has nothing more to say.

6790

Bachelor of Arts. Unless I will it, no devil can there be.

Mephistopheles [aside]. The Devil, though, will trip you presently.

Bachelor of Arts. This is youth's noblest message and most fit!

The world was not till I created it.

'Twas I that led the sun up from the sea;

6795

The moon began its changeful course with me.

The day put on rich garments, me to meet;

The earth grew green and blossomed, me to greet.

At my behest in that primeval night

The stars unveiled their splendour to my sight.

6800

Who, if not I, your own deliverance wrought

From fetters of Philistine, cramping thought?

I, as my spirit bids me, with delight

I follow onward mine own inner light.

Swift I proceed with mine own raptured mind.

6805

Glory before me, darkness far behind.

Exit.

Mephistopheles. Original, in all your glory take your way!

How would true insight make you grieve!

What wise or stupid thing can man conceive

That was not thought in ages passed away?

6810

Danger from him will cause us little bother,

He will be changed when a few years have passed;

Though must within the cask may raise a pother,

It turns to wine no less at last.

To the younger portion of the audience who do not applaud.

I see my words have left you cold;

6815

Good children, I'll not take it evil.

Remember that the Devil's old;

Grow old, to understand the Devil.

LABORATORY

*In the style of the Middle Ages; scattered, clumsy apparatus
for fantastic purposes.*

Wagner [at the furnace]. The bell resounds with fearful clangour,
The sooty walls thrill its vibration. 6820

No longer can remain uncertain

My great, most earnest expectation.

Darkness is lifting like a curtain.

Within the phial's inmost chamber

It's glowing like a living ember, 6825

Yea, like a glorious carbuncle, gleaming

And flashing, through the darkness streaming.

A clear white light comes into view!

Oh, may it not escape once more!—

Ah, God! what's rattling at the door? 6830

Mephistopheles [entering]. Welcome! I mean it well with you.

Wagner [anxiously]. Welcome in this auspicious hour!

Softly.

Don't speak or even breathe, though, I implore!

Achieved is soon a glorious undertaking.

Mephistopheles [more softly]. What is it, then?

Wagner [more softly].

A man is in the

making! 6835

Mephistopheles. A man? And, pray, what lovesick pair

Have you shut in the chimney-flue?

Wagner. May God forbid! Begetting, as men used to do,

Both vain and senseless we declare.

The tender point whence life used to begin, 6840

The gracious outward urgency from within,

To take and give, to have its likeness known,

Near and remote alike to make its own—

All that has lost its former dignity.

Whereas delighted with it still the beast may be, 6845

A man with his great gifts must henceforth win

A higher, even higher origin.

Turning toward the furnace.

It flashes, see! Now truly we may hold

That if from substances a hundredfold,

Through mixture—for on mixture all depends— 6850

Man's substance gently be consolidated,

In an alembic sealed and segregated,

And properly be cohobated,

In quiet and success the labour ends.

Turning toward the furnace again.

'Twill be! The mass is working clearer, 6855

Conviction gathers, truer, nearer.

What men as Nature's mysteries would hold,
 All that to test by reason we make bold,
 And what she once was wont to organize,
 That we bid now to crystallize.

6860

Mephistopheles. Whoever lives long learns full many things;
 By naught in this world can he ever be surprised.
 I've seen already in my wanderings
 Many a mortal who was crystallized.

Wagner [*hitherto constantly attentive to the phial*].

It rises, flashes, gathers on;

6865

A moment, and the deed is done.

A great design at first seems mad; but we
 Henceforth will laugh at chance in procreation,
 And such a brain that is to think transcendently
 Will be a thinker's own creation.

6870

Looking at the phial rapturously.

The glass resounds with lovely might;

It dims, it clears; life *must* begin to be.

A dainty figure greets my sight;

A pretty manikin I see.

What more do we or does the world want now?

6875

The mystery's within our reach.

Come, hearken to this sound, and listen how

It turns to voice, it turns to speech.

Homunculus [*in the phial, to WAGNER*].

Well, Daddy! how are you? It was no jest.

Come, press me tenderly upon your breast,

6880

But not too hard, for fear the glass might shatter.

That is the property of matter:

For what is natural the All has place;

What's artificial needs restricted space.

TO MEPHISTOPHELES.

How now, Sir Cousin, rogue, are you here too?

6885

And at the proper moment? Many thanks to you!

You've been led here by some good destiny.

The while I'm living, active must I be.

Fain would I gird me for the work straightway;

You are adroit and can curtail my way.

6890

Wagner. But one word more! I'm shamed that answers fail me,
 When with their problems young and old assail me.

For instance: no one's grasped how, each with either,

Body and soul can fit so well together,

Hold fast as if not to be separated,

6895

Yet each by other daily vexed and hated.

And then—

Mephistopheles. Stop! I would rather ask if he

Can say why man and wife so ill agree?

This point, my friend, will nevermore be clear.

The little chap wants work to do and it is here.

6900

Homunculus. What's to be done?

Mephistopheles [*pointing to a side door*].

Your talents here you're to

employ!

Wagner [*looking steadfastly into the phial*].

In truth you are the very loveliest boy!

The side door opens and FAUST is seen stretched out on the couch.

Homunculus [*astonished*].

Significant!

The phial slips out of WAGNER's hands, hovers above FAUST and illumines him.

¹ With beauty girt!—Clear waters moving

In a dense grove and women who undress;

Fairest of forms!—The picture is improving.

6905

But one outshines the rest in loveliness,

From noblest heroes, nay, from gods, descended.

In the translucent pool her foot she laves;

The living flame of her sweet form is blended

With th' cooling, clinging crystal of the waves.

6910

But what a noise of pinions swiftly dashing,

And in the pool what swishing, splashing!

The maidens flee abashed, but she, the queen,

With calm composure gazes on the scene.

With pleasure proud and womanly she sees

6915

The swan-prince² nestle fondly at her knees,

Importunate, yet tame. He grows more daring.

But swiftly upward floats a vapour pale

And covers with its closely woven veil

A scene most lovely and beyond comparing.

6920

Mephistopheles. How many tales you can relate!

Small as you are, in fancies you are great.

I can see naught—

Homunculus. Of course. You from the North,

In ages dark and drear brought forth,

In all the murk of knighthood and of papistry,

6925

How could your vision, then, be clear and free?

Only in gloom are you at home.

Looking around.

Be mouldered stone-work, dingy, horrid,

With pointed arches low and florid!

If this man wakes, there'll be new things to dread;

6930

At once upon the spot he will lie dead.

Prophetic dreams of woodland springs beguile him,

Of swans and naked beauties. Here,

¹Lines 6903-20 constitute a reproduction in verse of Correggio's painting of Leda and the swan.

²Zeus.

In such a place, how could he reconcile him,
Which I, the most adaptable, scarce bear? 6935
Now off with him!

Mephistopheles. Whither I'll hear with pleasure.

Homunculus. Command the warrior to the fight,
Lead forth the maid to tread a measure;
Then all is fitting, all is right.
Just now—my memory brings to light— 6940
Is Classical Walpurgis Night.
For him could be no happier event
Than to be taken to his element.

Mephistopheles. Of that I've never chanced to hear.

Homunculus. How would it come, pray, to your ear? 6945
Only romantic ghosts are known to you;
A ghost that's genuine must be classic too.

Mephistopheles. But whither, then, are we to travel? Tell me!
Your antique cronies now repel me.

Homunculus. Satan, northwest is where you're wont to play, 6950
But to the southeast we will sail today.
Along a great plain is Peneus¹ flowing free,
Its silent bays shadowed by bush and tree.
To mountain gorges sweeps the level view,
Above it stands Pharsalus old and new. 6955

Mephistopheles. Alack! have done! and call not old dissension
'Twixt tyranny and slavery to my attention.

It wearies me, no sooner is it done
When once more is the same old fight begun.
And no one notes that he is but the game 6960
Of Asmodeus who still fans the flame.
They're fighters, so they say, for freedom's rights;
More closely scanned, it's slave with slave that fights.

Homunculus. Oh, leave to men their fractious being. 6965
Each must defend himself as best he can,
From boyhood up; thus he becomes a man.
To this man's cure we must be seeing.
Come, prove it here if you've a remedy;
If you have not, then leave the cure to me.

Mephistopheles. Many a Brocken-game I might essay, 6970
But heathen bolts, I'll find, will block my way.
The Greeks were never worth much, it is true,
Yet their free play of senses dazzles you,
The heart of man to happy vices winning.
Gloomy will always seem our ways of sinning. 6975
What now?

Homunculus. I know you're free of squeamish twitches!
And if I touch upon Thessalian witches,
I think I have not talked for naught.

¹A river in Thessaly.

Mephistopheles [*lustfully*]. Thessalian witches! They are persons—
well,

For them I long have asked and sought. 6980
Night after night with them to dwell
Is not, I'd say, a pleasant thought;
Let's spy them, try them, though—

Homunculus. The mantle therel

Come, wrap it straightway round the knight!
As heretofore the rag will bear 6985
You both upon your novel flight.
I'll light the way.

Wagner [*anxiously*]. And I?

Homunculus. Well, you

Will stay at home, most weighty work to do.
Open the parchment-sheets, collect
Life-elements as the recipes direct, 6990
With caution fitting each to other. Ponder
The *What*—to solve the *How* still harder try,
While through a little piece of world I wander
To find the dot to put upon the *i*.
Accomplished then will the great purpose be. 6995
Striving earns high requital: wealth,
Honour and fame, long life and perfect health,
Knowledge and virtue too—well, possibly.
Farewell!

Wagner [*sorrowfully*]. Farewell! My heart is wrung with pain.

I fear that I will see you never again. 7000

Mephistopheles. Now to Peneus, quick, descend!

Sir Coz shall not be meanly rated.

To the spectators.

It's true, at last we all depend

On creatures we ourselves created.

CLASSICAL WALPURGIS NIGHT

PHARSALIAN FIELDS

Darkness

Erichtho. To this night's awful festival, as oft before, 7005

I stride in view, *Erichtho*,¹ I the gloomy one,

Not so atrocious as the tiresome poet-crew

Calumniate me to excess . . . They never end

In praise and censure . . . Even now the vale appears

Far, over-whitened with the billows of gray tents, 7010

Spectres of that most dire and most appalling night.

How oft it has recurred already! Evermore

It will recur forever . . . No one grants the realm

Unto another, none to him who through his might

¹A Thessalian witch.

Has won and rules it. For each one who knows not how 7015
 To rule his own, his inborn self, is all too fain
 To rule his neighbour's will, as prompts his own proud mind . . .
 Here was a great example fought even to the end:

How violence opposes greater violence,
 How freedom's lovely, thousand-blossomed wreath is rent, 7020
 And the stiff laurel bends around the ruler's head.
 Here of an early budding greatness Pompey dreamed,
 There Cæsar by the wavering balance watchful lay!
 Strength will they measure. And the world knows now who won.

The watch-fires glow and flash, diffusing ruddy flames; 7025
 The ground where blood was shed exhales reflected light;
 And by the night's most rare and wondrous splendour lured,
 The legion of Hellenic myths assembles here.

Round all the watch-fires fabled forms of ancient days
 Hover uncertain to and fro or sit at ease . . . 7030

In truth, not fully orb'd, yet radiant bright, the moon
 Is rising, spreading gentle splendour everywhere;
 The tents' illusion vanishes, the lights burn blue.

But lo! above my head what sudden meteor!
 It beams and it illumines a corporeal ball. 7035

'Tis life I scent. Becoming is it not for me
 That I approach the living, doing harm to them.
 That brings me evil fame and benefits me not.
 Already it sinks down. Discreetly I withdraw.

Moves away.

The AERONAUTS overhead.

Homunculus.

Once again around I hover, 7040
 Flames and horrors die I follow;
 Spectral all that I discover
 In the vale and in the hollow.

Mephistopheles.

As through my old window looking
 Midst far northern waste and gloom, 7045
 Ghosts revolting I see spooking,
 Here as there I am at home.

Homunculus.

See! a woman tall is stalking
 In long strides before us there.

Mephistopheles.

As if scared, it seems, she's walking, 7050
 Saw us coming through the air.

Homunculus.

Let her stalk! Set down the burden
 Of your knight, for near at hand
 Are the new life and the guerdon
 That he seeks in fable-land. 7055

Faust [*touching the soil*]. Where is she?

Homunculus.

That's a question over-
tasking,

But here you'll learn, I think, by asking.

Make ready, go ere it is day;

From flame to flame inquiring wander.

Who to the Mothers dared the way,

7060

Has nothing more to fear or ponder.

Mephistopheles. Here I too claim a part to play,

Yet for our weal naught better can I say

Than that each one amid the fires

Should seek his own adventures and desires.

7065

Then as a sign to reunite us,

Let, little friend, your lantern sound and light us.

Homunculus. Thus shall it ring and light display.

The glass resounds and emits a powerful light.

Now to new wonders, quick away!

Exit.

Faust [*alone*]. Where is she?—now no further question make . . .

7070

Though it be not the soil on which she stepped,

Nor this the wave that to her coming leapt,

Yet 'tis the air that speaks the tongue she spake.

Here by a wonder! Here in Grecian land!

I felt at once the earth on which I stand.

7075

As, while I slept, new strength my limbs was steeling,

I rise renewed, Antæus¹ in my feeling.

And while the strangest things assembled here I find,

I'll search this labyrinth of flames with serious mind.

Goes away.

BY THE UPPER PENEUS

Mephistopheles [*peering around*].

As mid these little fires I wander aimless,

7080

I find myself quite strange and disconcerted.

Naked are almost all, some few are shirted;

The griffins impudent, the sphinxes shameless,

Winged, curly things—who'll ever dare to name them?

Seen fore and aft, they're crude enough to shame them . . .

7085

It's true, indecency is our ideal,

But the antique is too alive and real.

By modern taste the nude should be controlled

And overlaid in fashions manifold . . .

A loathsome folk! yet so I must not treat them;

7090

As new-come guest I should politely greet them . . .

Hail, ye wise grizzlies, hail, ye ladies fair!

A Griffin [*snarling*]. Not grizzlies! Griffins! No one likes to hear

¹A giant whose strength was renewed in contact with Earth, his mother.

Himself called grizzly. In each word there rings
 An echo of the source from which it springs. 7095
 Graves, growling, grumpy, gruesome, grim, and grey,
 All of one sort in etymology are they,
 And put us out of sorts.

Mephistopheles. Yet—not to leave this thesis—

The *gri* in your proud title *Griffin* pleases.

Griffin [*as above and continuously so*].

Of course! The kinship has been proved to hold. 7100

'Tis true, it's oft rebuked but oftener extolled.

Let one but *grip* at maidens, crowns, and gold;

Fortune is mostly gracious to the *Gripper* bold.

*Ants of the colossal kind.*¹

You speak of gold! In great heaps did we hoard it,

In rocky caverns secretly we stored it; 7105

The Arimaspians² have nosed it out,

They bore it off so far they laugh and shout.

Griffin. We'll bring them to confess their deed.

Arimaspians. But not in this free night of jubilee.

Ere morning all will squandered be; 7110

This time we'll probably succeed.

Mephistopheles [*who has seated himself between the SPHINXES*].

How pleasantly I grow familiar here;

I understand them one and all.

A Sphinx. We breathe our spirit-tones into your ear,

And then you render them material. 7115

Until we know you better, tell your name.

Mephistopheles. Men think that many a title I may claim.

Are Britons here? Such travellers are they;

Cascades and battlefields they love to trace,

Ruins and many a musty classic place; 7120

A worthy goal they would find here today.

They testified that in the old stage-play

I was seen there as "Old Iniquity."

A Sphinx. How did they hit on that?

Mephistopheles. It puzzles even me.

A Sphinx. Perhaps!—Do you know planets and their power? 7125

What say you to the aspect of the hour?

Mephistopheles [*looking upward*].

Star courses star, I see the clipped moon glide

And feel quite happy at your cosy side;

I'll warm myself against your lion's-hide.

'Twould hurt to soar up, I'd but go astray. 7130

Propound some riddles or charades to play.

A Sphinx. Express yourself; that too will be a riddle.

See if your inmost essence you can rede:

¹These derive from Herodotus, iii. 102.

²Cf. *ibid.*, 116; iv, 13, 27.

"What both the pious and the wicked need:

For those a breastplate for ascetic fencing,

7135

For these a comrade, crazy pranks advancing,

Both but the joy of Zeus enhancing."

First Griffin [snarling]. I don't like him.

Second Griffin [snarling more loudly]. What is it he wants here?

Both. The nasty wretch belongs not in our sphere!

Mephistopheles [brutally].

You think perhaps the guest's nails do not scratch

7140

And with your sharp claws cannot match?

Just try it!

A Sphinx [gently]. Here you might forever stay,

But from our midst you'll drive yourself away.

At home you think to do just as you please,

But if I err not, here you're ill at ease.

7145

Mephistopheles. Right appetizing are you upward from the bosom,

But further down your beastly part is gruesome.

A Sphinx. These words, you hypocrite, you'll surely rue,

Because our paws are sound; but I can see

That with that shrunken horse's-foot you do

7150

Not feel at ease in our society.

SIRENS prelude overhead.

Mephistopheles. What birds are they who're cradled yonder

On boughs beside the poplared river?

A Sphinx. Beware! The best of men have ever

Been led by that singsong to wander.

7155

Sirens.

Ah, why mar thy taste completely,

Mid these hideous wonders dwelling?

Hear our notes accordant swelling,

See our hosts come singing sweetly

As becometh sirens meetly.

7160

Sphinxes [mocking them in the same melody].

Force them down! And so reveal them!

Mid the branches they conceal them;

Nasty falcon-claws they're wearing

And will fall on thee, unsparing,

If thou lendest willing ear.

7165

Sirens.

Hence with hate, let envy perish!

We the purest pleasures cherish

Strewn beneath the sky's blue sphere!

On the earth and on the ocean

Let him see in every motion

7170

Sign of welcome and of cheer.

Mephistopheles. What novelties and how assuring

When both from string and voice alluring

The tones about each other twine.
 But lost on me is all the trilling,
 Tickling my ears but never thrilling
 Down in its depths this heart of mine.

7175

Sphinxes. Speak not of heart! Vain so to call it!
 A shrivelled-up, old leathern wallet
 Would better with your face combine.

7180

Faust [approaching]. How strangely satisfying are these creatures!
 Repulsive, yet what big, compelling features!
 I feel now the approach of some good chance;
 Whither is hailing me that earnest glance?

Referring to the SPHINXES.

Before such Oedipus once stood his ground;

7185

Referring to the SIRENS.

Before such did Ulysses writhe, in hemp fast bound;

Referring to the ANTS.

By such was noblest treasure once amassed;

Referring to the GRIFFINS.

By these 'twas kept inviolate to the last.

New spirit thrills me when I see all these;

Great are the figures, great the memories.

7190

Mephistopheles. In former times such creatures you'd have scouted
 Which now it seems that you approve;

Aye, when one seeks his lady-love,

Monsters themselves are welcome and not flouted.

Faust [to the SPHINXES]. Ye forms like women, answer me and say: 7195
 Has anyone of you seen Helena?

Sphinxes. We did not last till Helena's generation;
 Hercules slew the last ones of our nation.

From Chiron! you might get the information.

This ghostly night he's galloping around;

7200

If he will stop for you, you've gained much ground.

Sirens.

With us too thou wouldst not miss it! . . .

When Ulysses, with us whiling,

Sped not past us, unreviling,

Much he told made bright his visit;

7205

All his tales we'd tell to thee

If thou camest to renew thee

To our meadows by the sea.

A Sphinx. Sir, hark not to trickery!
 Whereas Ulysses to the mast,
 Let us now with good counsel bind thee.

7210

If lofty Chiron thou canst find thee,

What I have sworn, thou wilt learn at last.

FAUST goes away.

¹The centaur, noted for his vast knowledge.

Mephistopheles [*vexed*]. What croaks on pinions rushing by?

So fast that they elude the eye?

7215

Swiftly in single file they fly.

A hunter tires of such as these.

A Sphinx. Like to the storm that winter harrows,

Reached scarcely by Alcides'¹ arrows,

They are the swift Stymphalides.

7220

They mean well with their croak-salute,

Their vulture's-beak, their goose's-foot.

Here in our midst they'd like to be

And prove they're of our pedigree.

Mephistopheles [*as if intimidated*].

Some other things are hissing shrill.

7225

A Sphinx. For fear of these you need not quake;

They are the heads of the Lernaean snake;²

Cut from the trunk, they think they're something still.

But say, what's wrong? why so distressful?

Why this behaviour so unestful?

7230

Where would you go? Be off, good-by!—

I see, that chorus twists your neck awry.

Don't force yourself to stay! Go, leave this place,

Greet yonder many a charming face.

The Lamiaë,³ wanton wenches, you'll find there,

7235

Their foreheads brazen, faces smiling,

As when the satyrs they're beguiling.

There all things may a goat's-foot dare.

Mephistopheles. You'll stay here and I'll find you here again?

Sphinxes. Yes! Go and mingle with the airy train.

7240

We long ago are wont, from Egypt coming here,

To sit enthronèd to the thousandth year.

Respect to our position you must pay.

Thus rule we lunar, rule we solar day.

At the pyramids our station,

7245

We look on the doom of races,

War and peace and inundation,

With eternal changeless faces.

BY THE LOWER PENEUS

PENEUS surrounded by waters and nymphs.

Peneus. Wake and stir, ye whispering bushes,

Softly breathe, ye reeds and rushes,

7250

Rustle, willows by the river,

¹Alcides: Hercules. The Stymphalides were monstrous birds of prey, with iron beaks and talons.

²Hercules cut off eight heads of the Lernaean Hydra; the ninth head remained immortal.

³Ghosts with an appetite for human flesh and blood.

Lisp, ye poplar sprays a-quiver,
To my interrupted dream! . . .

Fearful, stirring breezes wake me
And mysterious tremors shake me
From my rippling, restful stream.

7255

Faust [stepping to the edge of the river].

If I dare such fancies harbour,
Deep within the tangled arbour
Of these twigs and bushes noises
Sounded as of human voices.

7260

Wave doth seem a very chatter,
Zephyr sounds a jesting patter.

Nymphs [to FAUST].

Ah, best were it for thee
To lie here, reviving
In coolness thy members
Worn out by their striving,
The rest thus enjoying
That from thee doth flee;
We'll rustle, we'll murmur,
We'll whisper to thee.

7265

7270

Faust. I am awake! Oh, let them stay me,

Those peerless forms, and let them sway me
As mine eye sees them in its quest.

What thrills run through my every member!
Do I but dream? Do I remember?

7275

Ah, once before was I so blessed.

A cooling stream is softly gliding,
Amid the trembling copse half hiding;
It scarcely murmurs in its flow.

From every side, clear and delighting,
A hundred streamlets are uniting

7280

To fill a bath-like pool below.

The fair young limbs of women trouble

The liquid mirror, showing double,

And double so the eye's delight!

7285

Bathing with joy, each other aiding,

Now boldly swimming, shyly wading,

Ending in screams and water-fight.

These should content me, here with pleasure

My sight should be restored at leisure;

7290

Yet toward yonder leafy screen

My vision ever further presses;

The verdant wealth of those recesses

Surely enveils the lofty queen.

Strange and marvellous! Swans are swimming
From the inlets, hither skimming

7295

In their stately majesty,
 Calmly floating, sweetly loving,
 Heads and beaks uplifted moving
 In proud self-complacency. 7300
 But among them one seems peerless,
 In his self-love proud and fearless;
 Through the throng he sails apace,
 Swells his plumage like a pillow,
 He, a billow breasting billow, 7305
 Speeds on to the sacred place . . .
 The others to and fro, together,
 Swim with unruffled, radiant feather,
 Or soon in stirring, splendid fray
 Seek to divert each timid beauty 7310
 Away from any thought of duty
 To save herself if save she may.

Nymphs.

Sisters, hearken, lend a hearing
 At the river's verdant shore;
 If I err not, more and more 7315
 Sounds of horse's hoofs are nearing.
 Would I knew who in swift flight
 Brings a message to this night!

Faust. I believe the earth's resounding
 To a steed that's hither bounding. 7320

Turn there, my glancel
 A most auspicious chance,
 Can it be hither faring?
 O marvel past comparing!

A rider's trotting on toward me. 7325
 Spirited, strong, he seems to be;
 Borne on a snow-white steed he's nearing . . .

I do not err, I know him now,
 The famous son of Philyral—
 Halt, Chiron, halt! and give me hearing! 7330

Chiron. What now? What is it?

Faust. Check your pace and stay!

Chiron. I do not rest.

Faust. Take me along, I pray!

Chiron. Then, mount! and I can question you at leisure:
 Whither your way? You're standing on the shore
 And I will bear you through the stream with pleasure. 7335

Faust [*mounting*]. Whither you will, I'll thank you evermore . . .
 The noble pedagogue, so great in name,
 Who reared full many a hero, to his fame,
 The troop of Argonauts, renowned in story,
 And all who built the poets' world of glory. 7340

Chiron. Let us not talk of that. As mentor, none,
Not Pallas' self, is venerated.

For, after all, in their own way men carry on
As if they never had been educated.

Faust. The doctor who can name each plant, who knows 7345
All roots, even that which deepest grows,
Who soothes the wounded, makes the sick man whole,
You I embrace with all my might and soul.

Chiron. If at my side a hero felt the smart,
I knew the aid and counsel to be tendered! 7350
But in the end all of my art
To parsons and herb-women was surrendered.

Faust. Upon a true, great man I gaze!
Who will not hear a word of praise,
Modestly strives to shut his ears 7355
And acts as had he many peers.

Chiron. You are well-skilled, I see, in idle patter,
Princes and common folk alike to flatter.

Faust. At least confess that you have seen
The greatest men that in your time have been. 7360
You've with the noblest vied in earnest strife
And like a demigod have lived your life.
Of all the figures of heroic mould
Whom as the ablest did you hold?

Chiron. Among the Argonauts, superb procession! 7365
Each one was worthy after his own fashion,
And by the special power that he possessed,
Could do what lay beyond the rest.

Castor and Pollux ever did prevail
Where youthful bloom and beauty turned the scale. 7370
In swift resolve and act for others' good

The sons of Boreas¹ proved their hardihood.
Reflective, strong and shrewd, in council wise,
Thus Jason ruled, a joy to women's eyes. 7375

Then Orpheus, gentle, still, and contemplating,
But, when he smote the lyre, all subjugating;
Keen-sighted Lynceus who by day and dark
Past reef and shallow steered the sacred bark.

Danger is tested best by banded brothers:
When one achieves, then praise him all the others. 7380

Faust. I beg, of Hercules I would be learning!

Chiron. Oh, woe! Awaken not my yearning! . . .
Phoebus I ne'er had seen, nor yet
Seen Ares, Hermes, as they're called, in fine,
When my enraptured vision met 7385
A form that all men call divine.

A king by birth as was no other,

¹They rescued their sister's husband from the Harpies.

A youth most glorious to view,
 A subject to his elder brother
 And to the loveliest women too. 7390
 His like will Gæa¹ bring forth never
 Nor Hebe lead to Heaven again;
 Songs struggle in a vain endeavour,
 Men torture marble all in vain.

Faust. Though men may strive in stone and story, 7395
 Never has he appeared in all his glory.
 You now have spoken of the fairest man;
 Tell of the fairest woman all you can!

Chiron. What! Woman's beauty? That is not worth telling,
 Too oft a rigid image do we see; 7400
 I praise alone a being welling
 With love of life and gaiety.
 Self-blest is beauty, cold and listless,
 'Tis winsomeness that makes resistless,
 Like that of Helena whom once I bore. 7405

Faust. You bore her?

Chiron. Aye, upon this back.

Faust. Was I not crazed enough before?

And here to sit! Such bliss I do not lack!

Chiron. She also grasped me by the hair,
 Seizing it just as you are doing now. 7410

Faust. I'm losing all my senses! Tell me how,
 Whence, whither? Ah, you really did her bear?
 She only is my whole desire!

Chiron. Easy it is to tell what you require.
 Castor and Pollux had at that time freed 7415
 Their darling sister² from base robbers' greed.
 The robbers, wonted not to be subdued,
 Took heart and in a storm of rage pursued.

Brothers and sister, speeding on their way,
 Were checked by swamps that near Eleusis lay; 7420
 The brothers waded, but I splashed, swam over;
 Then off she sprang, she stroked and pressed me
 On my wet mane, thanked and caressed me
 Sweetly self-conscious, affectionate and sage.

How charming was she! young, the joy of age! 7425

Faust. Just ten years old!

Chiron. The doctors of philology

Have fooled you like themselves, I see.

Peculiar is it with a mythologic dame;

The poet brings her, as he needs, to fame;

She never grows adult and never old,

Always of appetizing mould, 7430

¹Earth.

²Helen, held captive by Theseus.

Ravished when young, still wooed long past her prime.
Enough, the poet is not bound by time.

Faust. Then, here too, be no law of time thrown round her!

On Pheræ's isle indeed Achilles found her 7435

Beyond the pale of time. A happiness, how rare!

In spite of fate itself love triumphed there.

Is it beyond my yearning passion's power

To bring to life the earth's most perfect flower?

That deathless being, peer of gods above, 7440

Tender as great; sublime, yet made for love!

You saw her once, *today* I've seen her too,

Charming as fair, desired as fair to view.

My captured soul and being yearn to gain her;

I will not live unless I can attain her. 7445

Chiron. Strange person! As a man you feel an ecstasy,

But to us spirits you seem mad to be.

Now, as it haps, good fortune meets you here,

Since for some moments every year

I'm wont to Manto to repair 7450

Who, Aesculapius' child, in silent prayer

Implores her father, for his honour's gain,

To throw some light in the physicians' brain

That from rash slaughter may their hands refrain . . .

I love her most of all the guild of sybils, 7455

Gentle and kind, nor prone to shift y quibbles.

If but a while you stay, her art secure

By powerful roots will work your perfect cure.

Faust. I'm sound in mind. A cure is not my aim;

Else, like to others, I'd be base and tame. 7460

Chiron. The noble fountain's cure, neglect it not!

Be quick, dismount! We've reached the spot.

Faust. Say, whither have you in this gruesome night

Borne me through pebbly waters in our flight?

Chiron. Here! Rome and Greece each bearded each in fight, 7465

Olympus on the left, Peneus on the right.

The greatest realm that ever was lost in sand;

The monarch flees, the conquering burghers stand.

Look up! Here stands, significantly near,

The eternal temple in the moonlight clear. 7470

Manto [*dreaming, within*].

From horse-hoofs bounding

The sacred stairs are resounding;

Demigods are drawing near.

Chiron.

Quite right!

Raise your eyes; behold who's herel 7475

¹At Pydna, where the Romans defeated King Perseus of Macedonia (168 B.C.).

Manto [*awakening*]. Welcome! I see you do not fail to come.

Chiron. Likewise for you still stands your temple-home.

Manto. Are you still roaming, never weary?

Chiron. Well, you abide in stillness eerie,

The while I circle joyously.

7480

Manto. I wait here, time encircles me.

And this man?

Chiron. Him hath this ill-fated night

Caught in its whirl and brought here to your sight.

Helena, go his wits a-spinning,

Helena he has dreams of winning,

7485

But knows no way to make beginning,

Most worthy, Aesculapian cure to prove.

Manto. Who yearns for the impossible I love.

CHIRON is already far away.

Manto. Enter, audacious one, glad shall you be;

The gloomy way leads to Persephone.

7490

Within Olympus' cavern foot

She lists in secret for prescribed salute.

Here did I smuggle Orpheus in of old.

Use your turn better! Quick! be bold!

They descend.

BY THE UPPER PENEUS

Sirens [*by the upper Peneus as before*].

Plunge ye in Peneus' flood!

7495

Meetly splashing, swimming, fording,

Linking songs in tones according,

For these ill-starred people's good.

Without water weal is none!

If our goodly bands were faring

7500

To the Aegean, swift repairing,

Every joy would then be won.

Earthquake.

Sirens.

Back the foaming wave is going,

Down its bed no longer flowing;

Quakes the ground, the waters choke,

7505

Shores and pebbles crack and smoke.

Let us flee! Come, all! Come on!

For this marvel profits none.

Hence! Ye noble guests and merry,

To the ocean revel hurry,

7510

Glittering where the waves are twinkling,

Heaving gently, shores besprinkling,

There where Luna twofold gloweth,

Holy dew on us bestoweth.

- There a life astir and cheerful, 7515
 Here an earthquake dire and fearful.
 Hence, ye prudent, haste away!
 For this place strikes with dismay.
*Seismos*¹ [*growling and blustering in the depths*].
 Shove again with shoulders straining,
 Stoutly all your strength arraigning! 7520
 Upper regions we'll be gaining,
 Where to us must all give way.
Sphinxes.
 What a most unpleasant quivering,
 What a hideous, fearsome shivering!
 What a wavering, what a shocking, 7525
 Surging to and fro and rocking!
 An unbearable affray!
 But we shall not change our places,
 Though all hell bursts in our faces.

 Now a dome—behold the wonder!— 7530
 Is arising. Ah, 'tis yonder
 Very Ancient, long since hoar,
 Who built Delos' isle of yore,
 Drove it upward from the billow
 For a travailing woman's pillow.² 7535
 He, with straining, pressing, rending,
 Rigid arms and shoulders bending,
 Like an Atlas in his gesture,
 Heaves up earth and all its vesture,
 Loam and stone and sand and gravel, 7540
 Quiet shores and calm beds' level.
 Thus the valley's placid bosom
 Rends he with a power gruesome,
 Still most strenuous, never sated,
 A colossal caryatid, 7545
 Bears an awful weight of boulders,
 Buried still up to his shoulders.
 But 'twill not come near these spaces;
 Sphinxes now are in their places.

Seismos. I, only, wrought this little matter 7550
 As men will finally declare;
 But for my batter and my clatter
 How would this world be now so fair?
 How would your mountains stand above there

¹Earthquake.

²Poseidon, at the instigation of Zeus, thrust up Delos from the sea so that Leto might give birth to Apollo and Diana, her offspring by Zeus. Hera had vowed that the pregnant goddess should not give birth in any place the sun had ever shone upon.

7555

In clear and splendid ether-blue,
If them I had not worked to shove there?

A picturesque, entrancing view!

Whenas (the primal sires surveying,
Chaos and Night) I saw my honour lost,

I, with the Titans joined in playing,

7560

Hurled Ossa, Pelion too, as balls are tossed.

Thus we raged on in youthful passion

Till vexed and weary at the last

Both mountains we, in wanton fashion,

Like twin peaks on Parnassus cast . . .

7565

Apollo gladly lingers yonder

There in the muses' blest retreat.

For Jove himself and for his bolts of thunder

I heaved on high his lofty seat.

Thus I, by strainings superhuman,

7570

Pushed from the depths to upper air,

And dwellers glad I loudly summon

New life henceforth with me to share.

Sphinxes. Surely one would call primeval

What so burg-like looms today,

7575

But we saw the earth give way

To the straining, vast upheaval.

A bushy wood is spreading up the side,

While rocks on rocks still roll on like a tide.

A sphinx will never let such things perturb her,

7580

Nor in her sacred seat will aught disturb her.

Griffins. Gold a-spangle, gold a-flitter,

Through the chinks I see it glitter.

Let none rob you of the prize:

Up and claw it, emmets! Rise!

7585

Chorus of Ants.

Whereas the giant ones

Upward could shove it,

Ye nimble, pliant ones,

Swift speed above it!

Scurry ye out and in!

7590

In each cranny

Is every crumb ye win

Wealth for the canny.

Ye must discover it,

The slightest treasure,

7595

Swiftly uncover it

In every fissure.

Toil like the busy bees,

Ye swarms, retrieve it.

Gold only shall ye seize!

7600

What's oreless, leave it!

Griffins. Come, come! Bring in a heap of gold!
 Beneath our claws fast will we hold.
 They're bolts none others can excel,
 They guard the greatest treasure well.

7605

Pygmies. We are in our places truly,
 Know not how it did befall.
 Whence we came, don't ask unduly,
 For we're here now once for all.

7610

As a joyous place to settle,
 Suitable is every land;
 If a rocky rift shows metal,
 Straightway is the dwarf at hand.
 Male and female, busy, ready,
 Exemplary is each pair;
 We know not if once already
 This the case in Eden were.

7615

Our lot gratefully we treasure,
 For we find things here are best;
 Mother Earth brings forth with pleasure
 In the east as in the west.

7620

Dactyls.

Hath in a night the Earth
 The little ones brought to birth,
 The smallest she will create too,
 They will find each his mate too.

7625

Eldest Pygmies.

Hasten, in spaces
 Pleasant take places!
 Haste, the work heeding,
 Not strong but speeding!
 Peace is still with ye,
 Build ye the smithy
 For troops to shapen
 Armour and weapon.

7630

All ye ants, cluster,
 Busily fluster,
 Metals to muster!
 Dactyls conforming,
 Tiny but swarming,
 Our orders hear ye
 And firewood bear ye!
 Heap in a pyre
 Smothering fire!
 Charcoal prepare ye!

7635

7640

Generalissimo.

With bow and arrow
 Foes will we harrow!

7645

Herons that wander
 By that pond yonder,
 Numberless nesting there,
 Haughtily breasting there,
 Shoot them straightway, 7650
 All them together,
 In helm and feather
 Us to array.

Ants and Dactyls.

Who now will save us!
 Iron we're bringing, 7655
 Chains to enslave us.
 Chains we're not springing,
 Not yet's the hour;
 Heed, then, their power!

The Cranes of Ibycus.

Cries of murder, moan of dying! 7660
 Fearful pinions fluttering, flying!
 What a groan and moan and fright
 Pierces upward to our height!
 All have fallen in the slaughter,
 Reddened with their blood the water. 7665
 Greedy lust, misshapen, cruel,
 Steals the heron's noble jewel.
 On the helmet now it waves,
 Oh, these fat-paunched, bow-legged knaves!
 Comrades with our host in motion, 7670
 Serried wanderers of the ocean,
 Summon we, for vengeance mated,
 In a case so near related.
 Let none spare his strength or blood!
 Hate eternal to this brood! 7675

They disperse in the air, croaking.

Mephistopheles [on the plain].

The northern witches I command, but these,
 Spirits so alien, make me ill at ease.
 The Blocksberg's a convenient place to roam;
 Wherever you are, you find yourself at home.
 Dame Ilse watches for us on her Stone, 7680
 Wakeful is Henry on his lofty Throne;
 The Snorers snort, in truth, in Elend's ears,
 But all remains unchanged a thousand years.
 But who knows here, if, where he stand or go,
 The ground will not heave upward from below? . . . 7685
 I wander through a level dale quite happily,
 And then behind me rises suddenly
 A mountain—scarce a mountain, yet in height
 Enough to block the sphinxes from my sight.

Here, down the valley, many a fire is glaring, 7690
 Its light on these strange scenes and figures flaring . . .

Still, knavishly confusing, lo! the amorous crew
 Flutter and dance before me, flee and woo.

But softly now! Though used to many savours,
 Wherever they be, one still seeks novel flavours. 7695

Lamiae [*drawing* MEPHISTOPHELES *after them*].

Quicker and quicker!

And never tarry!

Then hesitating,

Chatting and prating.

It is so merry, 7700

The ancient tricker

To lure behind us

To penance dreary.

Foot-stiff and weary,

On he comes hobbling, 7705

Alter us wobbling;

He drags his foot,

Hasting to find us.

Vain is his suit.

Mephistopheles [*standing still*].

Cursed fate! Men are but women's fools! 7710

From Adam down, becozened tools!

Older we grow but who grows wise and steady?

Were you not fooled enough already?

We know that wholly worthless is this race

With pinched-in waist and painted face;

Naught's wholesome in a folk so misbegotten; 7715

Grasp where you will, in every limb they're rotten.

We know it, see it, we can feel it,

And still we dance it but the vile jades reel it!

Lamiae [*pausing*]. Halt! See him ponder, hesitate, delay! 7720

Turn back to meet him lest he slip away!

Mephistopheles [*striding forward*]. Go on! not in the web of doubt

Let yourself be entangled foolishly;

For if no witches were about,

Why, who the devil would a devil be!

7725

Lamiae [*most winsomely*]. Round this hero circle we;

Surely soon within his breast

Love for one is manifest.

Mephistopheles. True, in this uncertain gleam,

Pretty wenches do you seem,

And you'll hear no slurs from me. 7730

*An Empusa*¹ [*intruding*]. Nor slur me! A maiden too,

Let me join your retinue.

¹A shape-changing spook.

Lamiæ. In our group she'll never fit,

And our sport? she ruins it.

7735

Empusa [to MEPHISTOPHELES]. From ass-foot Coz Empusa, greeting!

The trusty one whom now you're meeting.

You only have a horse's foot;

Still, take, Sir Coz, my best salute!

Mephistopheles. Strangers alone were here by expectations,

7740

But now, alas! I'm finding near relations.

Indeed, an ancient book doth tell us:

Everywhere cousins from the Hartz to Hellas.

Empusa. I'm swift in acting with decision,

In many forms could meet your vision;

7745

But honour due you I would pay

And so the ass's head I've donned today.

Mephistopheles. I note, with people of this sort

Kinship is stuff of great import;

But come what may, it's all the same,

7750

The ass's head I'd fain disclaim.

Lamiæ. Avoid this hag! She doth but scare

Whatever lovely seems and fair;

What fair and lovely was before,

She comes, and see! it is no more!

7755

Mephistopheles. These cousins too, slim and delicious,

Of one and all I am suspicious;

Behind such darling cheeks of roses

I have a fear of metamorphoses.

Lamiæ. Just try it, do! We are not few.

7760

Lay hold! and if the game's luck favours you,

Grab for yourself the first, great prize.

What means this lustful, droning tune?

What sort of way is this to spoon?

You strut along and act so wise!

7765

Into our group now see him stride!

Lay one by one your masks aside

And show your nature to his eyes.

Mephistopheles. The fairest I have chosen me . . .

Clasping her.

Oh, woe! A withered broomstick, she!

7770

Seizing another.

And this one? . . . Hideous face! Oh, what a lot!

Lamiæ. Do you deserve things better? Think it not!

Mephistopheles. The little one I'd like to clasp . . .

A lizard's slipping from my grasp!

And snake-like is her slippery braid.

7775

Well, then, a tall one I will catch . . .

And now a thyrsus-pole I snatch!

Only a pine-cone as its head.

Where will this end? . . . Let's try a fat one.

- Perhaps I'll find delight in that one. 7780
 A last attempt! Then it will do!
 So flabby, fatty, worth a treasure
 As Orientals such things measure . . .
 But ah, the puff-ball bursts in two!
- Lamiae.* Scatter asunder, flicker around him, 7785
 Like lightning, in black flight surround him.
 The interloping witch's son!
 Ye bats, in horrid, changeful reeling,
 Whirl ye, on noiseless pinions wheeling!
 He'll get off cheap when all is done. 7790
- Mephistopheles* [*shaking himself*].
 I have not grown much wiser, that seems clear.
 The North's absurd, absurd it's also here;
 Ghosts here and there are a confounded crew,
 Tasteless the people and the poets too.
 A masquerade is here, I swear, 7795
 A sensual dance as everywhere.
 At lovely rows of masks I grasped
 And shuddered at the things I clasped . . .
 I gladly lend myself to cheating
 But ask to have it not so fleeting. 7800
- Losing himself among the rocks.*
 Where am I? Where does this lead out?
 There was a path, now stone-heaps roundabout.
 I came along on level ways,
 And rubble-stuff now meets my gaze;
 I clamber up and down in vain. 7805
 My sphinxes—where find them again?
 I'd not have dreamed so mad a sight,
 Aye, such a mountain in one night!
 "A witch-ride" would not name it wrong;
 They bring their own Blocksberg along. 7810
- Oread* [*from a natural rock*]. Come up to me! My mount is old
 And still has its primeval mould.
 Revere these cliff-paths steep ascending
 And Pindus' last spur far extending!
 Unshaken, thus I reared my head 7815
 When over my shoulders Pompey fled.
 Beside me here this phantom rock
 Will vanish at the crow of cock.
 Such fairy-tales I often see arise
 And perish in like sudden wise. 7820
- Mephistopheles.* Honour to thee, thou honoured head!
 With mighty oaks engarlanded.
 Moonbeams, however clear and bright,
 Never can pierce thy sable night.—
 But by the bushes there I see 7825

A light that's glowing modestly.
 How strange that all must happen thus!
 In truth, it is Homunculus.

Whence do you come, you little rover?

Homunculus. From place to place I flit and hover 7830
 And wish that in the best sense I might *be*.

My glass I long impatiently to shatter;

Only from what I've seen and sec,

I do not like to venture on this matter.

But I'll tell you quite confidentially: 7835

I've tracked two sages whom I've overheard

Say "Nature!" "Nature!"—'twas their only word.

I will not part me from them, seeing

That they must know this earthly be-ing;

And in the end I'll doubtless learn 7840

Whither most wisely I'm to turn.

Mephistopheles. Accomplish that in your own way.

Wherever ghosts may be appearing,

The sage finds welcome and a hearing;

And that his art and favour may elate, 7845

A dozen new ghosts he'll at once create.

You'll not gain sense, except you err and stray!

You'll come to birth? Do it in your own way!

Homunculus. Good counsel, though, a man should never scout.

Mephistopheles. Proceed, then, and we'll see how things turn out. 7850

They separate.

Anaxagoras [*to THALES*]. You will not let your rigid mind be bent.

Is aught more needed to make you assent?

Thales. To every wind the wave bows fain enough,

But from the rugged rock it holds aloof.

Anaxagoras. Through flaming gas arose this rock we're seeing. 7855

Thales. In moisture came organic life to being.

Homunculus [*between the two*].

Ah, by your side to go, pray, suffer me!

I'm yearning to begin to be.

Anaxagoras. Have you, O Thales, even in one night 7860
 Brought such a mountain out of slime to light?

Thales. Nature with all her living, flowing powers

Was never bound by day and night and hours.

By rule she fashions every form, and hence

In great things too there is no violence.

Anaxagoras. But here there was! Plutonic, savage fire, 7865

Aeolian vapours' force, explosive, dire,

Broke through the ancient crust of level earth

And a new mountain straightway came to birth.

Thales. The hill is there; so much at least is gained.

But what is thereby furthered and attained? 7870

Both time and leisure in such strife one poses

And only leads the patient rabble by their noses.

Anaxagoras. Quickly with Myrmidons the hill is teeming.

They occupy the clefts; and now come streaming

Pygmies and ants and fingerlings¹

7875

And other active little things.

To HOMUNCULUS.

After the great you never have aspired

But hermit-like have lived retired;

If you can wont yourself to sovereignty,

Then crowned as king I'll have you be.

7880

Homunculus. What says my Thales?

Thales.

That I won't advise.

With little people little deeds arise;

Among the great, the little man grows great.

See there! The cranes, the swarthy cloud,

They menace the excited crowd

7885

And they would menace thus the king.

With beaks sharp-pointed, talons fierce,

The little ones they tear and pierce;

Already doom comes thundering.

Hérons had suffered impious slaughter,

7890

Standing about the tranquil water.

But from that rain of murd'rous engines

Has sprung a blessèd, bloody vengeance;

It stirs the rage of brotherhood

And lust for pygmies' impious blood.

7895

Shield, helmet, spear—how profit these?

What use to dwails the heron feather?

How ant and dactyl hide together!

The host now wavers, breaks, and flees.

Anaxagoras [after a pause, solemnly].

If till now subterranean I praised,

7900

In this case be my prayer to Heaven raised . . .

O Thou on high, the same eternally,

In name and form threefold supernally,

By all my people's woe I cry to Thee,

Diana, Luna, Hecate!

7905

Thou breast-expanding One, most deeply pensive One,

Thou peaceful seeming One, mighty intensive One,

Break from the glooms of Thy dark chasm clear,

And without magic let Thine ancient might appear!

Pause.

Am I too quickly heard?

7910

Hath my prayer

To yonder sphere

The ordered course of Nature stirred?

And greater, ever greater, draweth near

¹The Dactyls of lines 7622-5.

The goddess' throne, her full-orbed sphere—

7915

To gaze upon, appalling, dire!

And ruddier, redder glows its fire . . .

No nearer! threatening orb, I pray,

Lest Thou wilt sweep us, land, and sea away!

Thessalian witches? Can it then be true

7920

That Thee once from Thy proper path they drew,

By spells of impious magic sung,

And fatal gifts from Thee so wrenched and wrung? . . .

The brilliant shield, behold, it darkles!

And now it splits and flares and sparkles!

7925

What clattering! What hissing yonder!

And midst it what wild hurricane and thunder!

Humbly I kneel here at Thy throne!

Forgive! I have invoked it, I alone!

He throws himself on his face.

Thales. What has this man not seen and heard!

7930

I know not rightly what occurred;

Nor yet like him have I experienced it.

They're crazy hours, let us admit.

And Luna's swaying comfortably

In her old place as formerly.

7935

Homunculus. Look at the pygmies' seat! I vow,

The hill was round, it's pointed now.

I seemed to feel an awful shock;

Down from the moon had plunged a rock;

At once, without a question, too,

7940

Both friend and foe it squashed and slew.

High arts like these I have to praise,

Which, by some great creative might,

Working above, below, could raise

This mountain-pile in but one night.

7945

Thales. Be calm! 'Twas but like thought in rapid flight.

Let them be gone, the nasty brood!

'That you were not their king is good.

Now to the sea's glad fête let us repair.

They hope and honour rare guests there.

7950

Exeunt.

Mephistopheles [*climbing up on the opposite side*].

Up steep rock stairways I am forced to fag me,

Through stubborn roots of ancient oak trees drag me!

Up in my Hartz there is a resinous savour

With hints of pitch, and that enjoys my favour

Almost like brimstone . . . In this Grecian place,

7955

Of scents like these there's scarcely any trace.

I'm curious to know and would inquire

Wherewith they feed hell's torments and hell's fire.

A Dryad. At home be wise as it befits you there;

- Abroad you have no cleverness to spare. 7960
 Homeward you should not turn your thoughts while here;
 You should the sacred oaks' high worth revere.
- Mephistopheles.* We think of what behind us lies;
 What we were used to seems a Paradise.
 But say: What cowers in the cavern there, 7965
 Threefold in form and dimly lighted?
- A Dryad.* The Phorkyads! ¹ Approach them if you dare
 And speak to them if you are not affrighted.
- Mephistopheles.* Why not?—I see a something and I wonder. 7970
 I must confess although it hurts my pride:
 The like of them I've never yet espied.
 Why, worse than mandrakes, they look yonder . . .
 How can the Deadly Sins then ever be
 Considered ugly in the least degree
 If one has seen this monstrous trinity? 7975
 We would not suffer it to dwell
 Upon the threshold of our grimmiest hell.
 Here in the land of beauty it is rooted,
 The classic, antique land reputed . . .
 They seem to scent me now and stir and chitter; 7980
 Like vampire bats they peep and twitter.
- A Phorkyad.* Give me the eye, my sisters, to espy
 Who to our temple dares to come so nigh.
- Mephistopheles.* Most honoured! I approach you, with your leave,
 That I your threefold blessing may receive. 7985
 I come, though as a stranger, be it stated,
 Yet, if I err not, distantly related.
 Gods ancient and revered I've seen ere now,
 To Ops and Rhea made my deepest bow.
 The Fates, your sisters too, whom Chaos bore, 7990
 I saw them yesterday—or else the day before.
 But others like yourselves I've never sighted,
 And I stand mute, amazed, delighted!
- The Phorkyads.* Intelligent this spirit seems to be.
- Mephistopheles.* That no bard sings your praise amazes me. 7995
 And say! How came it, how could it have been?
 Your likeness, worthy ones, I've never seen!
 On you the chisel should try out its art,
 And not on Juno, Pallas, Venus, and that sort.
- The Phorkyads.* Immersed in stillest night and solitude, 8000
 We Three have never felt that thought intrude.
- Mephistopheles.* How should it? Since withdrawn from earthly view,
 Here you see none, nor anyone sees you.
 But choose in other places to reside
 Where art and splendour equally preside, 8005

¹Daughters of Phorkyas (darkness), grey old women with one eye and one tooth in common.

Where daily in quick time from marble blocks
 Heroes leap into life in flocks,
 Where—

The Phorkyads. Silence! Stir in us no longings new!

What would it profit if we better knew?

We, born in night, akin to night alone,

8010

Are almost to ourselves, to others quite, unknown.

Mephistopheles. In such a case there is not much to say.

To others, though, one can one's self convey.

One eye, one tooth, suffices for you three,

So it would tally with mythology

8015

If into two the being of you three were blended

And your third form to me were lended

For a brief time.

One Phorkyad. What think you? Should we try?

The Other Phorkyads. Let's try it! But without the tooth or eye.

Mephistopheles. Take these away? The essence then you'll take,

8020

For it's the perfect image that they make.

One Phorkyad. Press one eye to—quite easily it's done—

And of your tusks show only one;

At once you will attain our profile meetly

And sisterly resemble us completely.

8025

Mephistopheles. Much honour! Be it so!

The Phorkyads.

So be it!

Mephistopheles [*in profile like a PHORKYAD*]. Done!

Here stand I, Chaos' well-belovèd son!

The Phorkyads. Daughters of Chaos we, by undisputed right!

Mephistopheles. Oh, shame! They'll call me now hermaphrodite!

The Phorkyads. What beauty in the sisters' triad new!

8030

We have two eyes, our teeth are two.

Mephistopheles. From all eyes I must hide this visage well

To fright the devils in the pool of Hell.

Exit.

ROCKY COVES OF THE AEGEAN SEA

Moon tarrying in the zenith.

Sirens [*couched around on the cliffs, fluting and singing*].

If of yore, by spells nocturnal,

Did Thessalian hags infernal

8035

Draw thee down, a crime intending,

Gaze thou where night's arch is bending

Down with calmness never-ending

On the billowy, twinkling ocean,

And illumine the commotion

8040

Rising from the billowing seal

To thy service vowed are we,

Lovely Luna, gracious bel

Nereids and Tritons [*as wonders of the sea*].

With a louder, shriller singing,
Through the breadth of ocean ringing, 8045
Summon here the deep's gay throng!
From the cruel tempest's riot
Fled we to the deepest quiet,
Hither lured by lovely song.

Here behold us decorated 8050
With gold chains and high elated;
Crowns and jewels do ye capture,
Brooches, girdles that enrapture.
All this harvest is your prey.
To us here these shipwrecked treasures 8055
Ye have brought with your sweet measures,
Ye, the magnets of our bay.

Sirens.

Well we know, in cool seas biding,
How the fishes, smoothly gliding,
Joy in life, from trouble far; 8060
Yet, ye festive hosts quick moving,
We today would see you proving
That ye more than fishes are.

Nereids and Tritons.

We, before we hither wandered,
Thought of that and deeply pondered. 8065
Sisters, brothers, swiftly fare!
Needs today but little travel
Proof to show past any cavil
That we more than fishes are.

They disappear.

Sirens.

Away they speed and race 8070
Straight toward Samothrace;
With kindly wind gone are they far.
What mean they to do in the eerie
Domain of the Mighty Cabiri? ¹
They're gods, and stranger were never; 8075
They beget their like ever and ever
And never know what they are.

Linger thou on thy height,
Lovely Luna, stay thy light,
That the night may not vanish 8080
Nor the day may us banish.

¹Originally Phœnician gods, they were worshipped on Lemnos and later on Samothrace. They now were said to have been the rulers of earth and sea.

Thales [on the shore, to HOMUNCULUS].

To ancient Nereus I would lead the way;
We're not far distant from his cave today,
But hard and stubborn is his pate,
Contrary, sour, old reprobate.
Nothing of mortal humankind
Is ever to that grumbler's mind.
The future, though, is known to him,
Wherefore men hold him in esteem
And honour him where he holds sway.
Kind has he been to many a one.

8085

8090

Homunculus. Let's try it then and see. Come on!

My glass and flame 'twill not cost me straightway.

Nereus. Are they men's voices that my ear has heard?

How quick with wrath my inmost heart is stirred!
These creatures would be gods by sheer endeavour,
Yet damned to be like their own selves forever.

8095

In days of old I could divinely rest,
Yet I was oft impelled to aid the Best,
But when at last I saw what they had done,
'Twas quite as if I had not counselled one.

8100

Thales. Yet people trust you, greybeard, ocean seer;

You are the Sage; oh, drive us not from here!
Gaze on this flame, like to a man, indeed;
Your counsel only will it hear and heed.

8105

Nereus. Counsel! With men has counsel once availed?

Vain are shrewd warnings to a fast-closed ear.
Oft as their deeds proved, men have grimly failed;
Self-willed are they still as they always were.
How I warned Paris with a father's trust
Before another's wife ensnared his lust!
Upon the Grecian shore he stood up bold,
And what I saw in spirit I foretold:

8110

The reeking air above, a ruddy glow,
Rafters ablaze, murder and death below:
Troy's Judgment Day, held fast in noble rhyme,
A horror famous to the end of time.

8115

Reckless he laughed at all that I could tell;
He followed his own lust and Ilion fell—
A giant corpse, stark when its torments ceased,
To Pindus' eagles a right welcome feast.

8120

Ulysses too! Told I not him erewhiles
Of Cyclops' horrors and of Circe's wiles?
His dallying, his comrades' thoughtless vein,
And what not all—but did it bring him gain?
Till, late enough, a favouring billow bore
The long-tossed wanderer to a friendly shore.

8125

Thales. Of course such action gives a wise man pain;

Still, if he's kind, he'll try it once again.

An ounce of thanks will in its bliss outweigh,

8130

Yes, tons of thanklessness for many a day.

And nothing trifling to implore have we:

The boy here wisely wants to come to be.

Nereus. Don't spoil my rarest mood, I pray!

Far other things await me here today:

8135

My daughters all I've summoned here to me,

The Dorides, the Graces of the Sea.

Olympus not, nor yet your soil, can bear

A form that is so dainty and so fair.

From dragons of the sea, all in most winsome motion,

8140

They leap on Neptune's coursers; in the ocean,

Their element, so tenderly at home

They seem to float upon the very foam.

On Venus' radiant, pearly chariot drawn,

Comes Galatea, lovely as the dawn.

8145

Since Cypris¹ turned from us her face,

She reigns in Paphos in the goddess' place.

And so, long since, the gracious one doth own,

As heiress, templed town and chariot-throne.

Away! It spoils a father's hour of pleasure,

8150

Harshness of tongue or hate of heart to treasure.

Away to Proteus! Ask that wondrous elf:

How one can come to be and change one's self.

He goes off toward the sea.

Thales. We have gained nothing by this stay.

Though one finds Proteus, straight he melts away;

8155

And if he stops for you, he'll say at last

Things that confuse you, make you stand aghast.

But, after all, such counsel do you need;

Let's try it and pursue our path with speed.

They go away.

Sirens [above on the rocks].

What's that far off, half hiding,

8160

Through ocean's billows gliding?

As if, to breezes bending,

White sails were hither wending.

Bright beam they over waters,

Transfigured ocean's daughters!

8165

Let us climb down! They're singing!

List to the voices ringing!

Nereids and Tritons.

What we escort and carry

Shall make you glad and merry.

¹Aphrodite.

THE SECOND PART, II

199

Chelone's shield gigantic¹
Gleams with stern figures antic;
They're gods whom we are bringing.
High songs must ye be singing.

8170

Sirens.

Little in height,²
Potent in might
Who shipwrecked men deliver,
Gods old and honoured ever.

8175

Nereids and Tritons.

We're bringing the Cabiri
To the peaceful pageant cheery,
For where they rule auspicious
Neptune will be propitious.

8180

Sirens.

We give way to you:
With resistless power
Ye save the perishing crew
In dire shipwreck's hour.

8185

Nereids and Tritons.

We have brought three only,
The fourth one tarried lonely;
He said he must stay yonder
Since he for all must ponder.

Sirens.

One god the other god
Can jeer and prod.
Their good deeds revere yel
All their ill ones fear yel

8190

Nereids and Tritons.

To seven ye should be praying.

Sirens.

Where are the three delaying?

8195

Nereids and Tritons.

For that we've no suggestion,
But on Olympus question;
Haply the eighth's there biding,
Not thought-of yet, and hiding.
In favours to us steady,
Yet are they all not ready.

8200

Peerless, unexplainable,
Always further yearning,
With desire and hunger burning
For the unattainable.

8205

¹Chelone, a nymph changed into a tortoise because she ridiculed the marriage of Zeus and Hera.

²The Cabiri were pictured as a clay-pot with a head superimposed.

Sirens.

Such our ways:
Where power most sways,
Worship we raise,
Sunward, moonward: it pays!

Nereids and Tritons.

How brightly shines our fame! behold! 8210
Leading this pageant cheery!

Sirens.

The heroes of olden time
To such fame don't climb,
Where and how it unfold,
Although they've won the Fleece of Gold, 8215
Ye've won the Cabiril

Repeated in full chorus.

Although they've won the Fleece of Gold,
We! Ye! the Cabiril!

NEREIDS and TRITONS move past.

Homunculus. These shapeless forms I look upon,

As poor clay-pots I take them; 8220
Their hard heads wise men often run
Against them and there break them.

Thales. That's just the thing that men desire;
The rusty coin is valued higher.

Proteus [unperceived]. This pleases me, an ancient fabler! 8225
The odder 'tis, the respectabler.

Thales. Where are you, Proteus?

Proteus [ventriloquizing, now near, now far]. Here! and here!

Thales. I pardon you that ancient jest;

But with a friend such idle words forgo!

You speak from some false place, I know.

8230

Proteus [as if from a distance]. Farewell!

Thales [softly to HOMUNCULUS]. He is quite near. Shine
brilliantly!

As curious as a fish is he;

Assume what form and place he may, be sure,

Flames are for him unfailing lure.

Homunculus. At once a flood of light I'll scatter, 8235
Discreetly, though, for fear the glass might shatter.

Proteus [in the form of a giant tortoise].

What beams so winsome, fair, and dear?

Thales [concealing HOMUNCULUS].

Good! If you wish, you can observe it near.

Don't let the little effort worry you,

Appear on two feet just as humans do.

8240

It's with our will and by our courtesy

That what we now conceal, who wills may see.

Proteus [*in a noble form*].

In clever, worldly pranks you still have skill.

Thales. You change your form with pleasure still.

He has uncovered HOMUNCULUS.

Proteus [*astonished*]. A radiant dwarflet! Such I never did
see! 8245

Thales. He asks advice and fain would come to be.

He has, he told me, come to earth

But half-way formed, a quite peculiar birth.

He has no lack of qualities ideal

But lacks too much the tangible and real. 8250

Till now the glass alone has given him weight;

He'd like forthwith to be incorporate.

Proteus. You are a virgin's son, yea, verily:

You are before you ought to be!

Thales [*softly*]. And from another angle things seem critical; 8255

He is, methinks, hermaphroditical.

Proteus. Success must come the sooner in that case;

As soon as he arrives, all will fit into place.

But here there is not much to ponder:

Your start must be in that wide ocean yonder! 8260

There on a small scale one begins,

The smallest things is glad to swallow,

Till step by step more strength he wins

And forms himself for greater things to follow.

Homunculus. Here stirs a soft and tender air, 8265

What fragrant freshness and what perfume rare!

Proteus. Dearest of urchins! I believe your story.

Farther away, it grows more ravishing;

The air upon that narrow promontory

Is more ineffable, more lavishing; 8270

There, near enough, the host we'll see

Now floating hither over the sea.

Come with me there!

Thales. I'll come along. Proceed!

Homunculus. A threefold spirit striding—strange, indeed!

TELCHINES OF RHODES on *hippocampi*¹ and sea-dragons, wielding

Neptune's trident.

Chorus. The trident of Neptune we've forged which assuages 8275

The wildest of billows when old Ocean rages.

When in the dense cloud-banks the Thund'rer is grumbling,

It's Neptune opposes the horrible rumbling;

However forked lightning may flash and may glow,

Still wave upon wave dashes up from below, 8280

And all that between them in anguish has wallowed,

Long hurled to and fro, by the depths all is swallowed;

¹The Telchines, sons of the sea, first created statues to the gods. The hippocampi combined the forepart of a horse and the tail of a dolphin.

Wherefore he has lent us his sceptre today.
Now float we contented and lightly and gay.

Sirens.

You, to Helios dedicated, 8285
You, to bright day consecrated,
Greet we in this stirring hour
When all worship Luna's power!

Telchines. O loveliest goddess in night's dome appearing!

The praise of thy brother with rapture art hearing. 8290

To Rhodes ever blessed an ear thou dost lend,

For there doth a pæan eternal ascend.

He begins the day's course, with keen, radiant gaze,

When finished the journey, our troop he surveys.

The mountains, the cities, the wave, and the shore

Are lovely and bright to the god we adore. 8295

No mist hovers round us, and if one appear,

A beam and a zephyr—the island is clear!

Phoebus there sees his image in forms hundredfold,

As giant, as youth, as the Gentle, the Bold. 8300

We first, it was we who first nobly began

To shape the high gods in the image of man.

Proteus.

Oh, leave them to their boasting, singing!

To sunbeams, holy and life-bringing,

Dead works are but an idle jest. 8305

They melt and mould in tireless rapture,

And when in bronze a god they capture,

They deem it great and swell their breast.

What end comes to these haughty men?

Their forms of gods, so great and true, 8310

Long since an earthquake overthrew,

And they were melted down again.

All life on earth, whatever it be,

Is never aught but drudgery;

In water life has far more gain. 8315

I'll bear you to the endless main,

I, Proteus-Dolphin.

He transforms himself.

Now it's done!

There where the happiest fates are leading

I'll take you on my back and speeding

I'll wed you to the ocean. On! 8320

Thales. Yield to the worthy aspiration

And at its source begin creation,

Ready for life's effective plan!

There you will move by norms unchanging;
Through forms a thousand, myriad, ranging,
You will, in time, become a man.

8325

HOMUNCULUS *mounts upon* PROTEUS-DOLPHIN.

Proteus. Come, spirit, seek the realm of ocean;

At once, unfettered every motion,
Live here and move as you would do.

But let not higher orders lure you,

8330

For once a man, I can assure you,

Then all is at an end with you.

Thales. That's as may be; yet it's not ill

A man's role in one's time to fill.

Proteus [to THALES]. Well, one of your kind, to be sure!

8335

For quite a while they do endure;

For midst your pallid phantom-peers

I've seen you now for many hundred years.

Sirens [on the rocks].

See yon cloudlets, how they mingle

Round the moon, how fair a ring!

8340

Doves they are, with love a-tingle,

White as light is every wing.

Paphos sent them as her greeting,

Ardent, radiant, they appear,

Thus our festival completing,

8345

Fraught with rapture full and clear!

Nereus [approaching THALES].

'Though night-wanderer make a pother,

Call yon ring an apparition,

Still we spirits take another,

Take the only right position.

8350

They are doves that are attending

On my daughter's pearly car;

Taught long since, in times afar,

Wondrously they're hither wending.

Thales. Since it gives a real man pleasure,

8355

I too hold that as the best

When a sacred, living treasure

Finds in him a still, warm nest.

Psylli and Marsi¹ [on sea-bulls, sea-calves, and sea-rams].

In Cyprus' rugged vaults cavernal

By sea-god never battered,

8360

By Seismos never shattered,

Fanned by the zephyrs eternal,

And, as in days long departed,

In conscious quiet glad-hearted,

The chariot of Cypris we've guarded,

8365

¹Psylli and Marsi: snake-charmers.

Through murmuring night's soft vibration,
 Over waves and their lovely pulsation,
 Unseen by the new generation,
 The loveliest daughter we lead.
 Our duty we're quietly plying, 8370
 From no Eagle¹ nor Wingèd Lion² flying,
 Nor from Cross nor Moon,
 As each dwells upon its throne,
 Now swaying, now essaying,
 Driving forth and now slaying, 8375
 Harvest and towns in ashes laying.
 Thus on, with speed,
 Hither the loveliest mistress we lead.

Sirens.

Lightly moving, hasting never,
 Round the chariot, line on line, 8380
 Now ring twines with ring, to waver
 In a series serpentine.
 Come, ye vigorous Nercides,
 Sturdy women, pleasing, wild,
 Bring, ye delicate Dorides, 8385
 Galatea, her mother's child:
 Earnest, like the gods, a woman
 Meet for immortality,
 Yet like women gently human,
 Of alluring charm is she. 8390

Dorides [in a chorus, all mounted on dolphins, passing by NEREUS].

Light and shadow, Luna, lend us,
 On this flower of youth shine clear!
 To our father we present us,
 Pleading bring we bridegrooms dear.

TO NEREUS.

They are boys we saved from dreaded
 Gnashing of the angry main;
 On the reeds and mosses bedded,
 Warmed we them to light again.
 Here, with kisses warm and tender,
 Loyal thanks must they now render; 8400
 May the Good thy favour gain!

Nereus. Great is the gain to win a twofold treasure:

Pity to show and in the show take pleasure.

Dorides.

Father, laudst thou our endeavour,
 Grant us joy deserved, in truth; 8405

¹The Romans.

²The Venetians.

Let us hold them fast forever
To the deathless breast of youth.

Nereus. You may delight in your fair capture.

Fashion to men the youthful crew;
Not mine to lend an endless rapture, 8410
That only Zeus can grant to you.
The wave that surges and that rocks you,
Allows to love no constant stand,
And when this fancy fades and mocks you,
Then set them quietly on land. 8415

Dorides.

Your love, sweet boys, doth us inspire,
Yet sadly we needs must sever;
Eternal the troth that we desire,
But gods will suffer it never.

The Youths.

We're sailor-boys of gallant mood, 8420
Pray further kindly tend us!
We've never had a life so good,
Nor can fate better send us.

GALATEA approaches in her shell chariot.

Nereus. It is you, my darling!

Galatea. O Sire, the delight!
Linger, ye dolphins! Entrancing the sight! 8425

Nereus. They're gone already, they draw us apart,
Wider and wider the circles sweep.
What do they care for the pain of my heart?
Would they but take me out over the deep!
Yet only one glance is so dear 8430
That it pays for the whole long year.

Thales. Hail! Hail again!

How blooms my joy amain!
By Truth and Beauty I'm penetrated . . .
From water first was all created! 8435
And water is the all-sustaining!
Ocean, continue forever thy reigning.
If thou the clouds wert sending not,
Wert swelling brooks expending not,
Here and there rivers wert bending not, 8440
And streams beginning, ending not,
Where then were the world, the mountains, and plain?
'Tis thou who the freshest of life dost maintain.

Echo [chorus of all the circles].

'Tis thou from whom freshest of life wells again.

Nereus. Wheeling afar, they turn apace, 8445
No more meet us face to face;

In lengthened chains extended,
In circles festively blended,
In countless companies they career.

But Galatea's sea-shell throne

8450

I see ever and anon.

It shines like a star

The crowd among!

My loved one beams through all the throng,

However far,

8455

Shimmers bright and clear,

Ever true and near.

Homunculus.

In this dear water brightens

All that my lamplet lightens,

All wondrous fair to see.

8460

Proteus.

This living water brightens

Where first thy lamplet lightens

With glorious harmony.

Nereus. What mystery new to our wondering eyes

Do I see in the midst of these beves arise?

8465

What flames round the sea-shell, at Galatea's feet?

Now mighty it flares up, now lovely, now sweet,

As if with love's pulsing 'twere touched and arrayed.

Thales. Homunculus is it, by Proteus swayed. . .

'The symptoms are those of a masterful yearning,

8470

Prophetic of agonized throbbing and burning.

He'll shatter himself on the glittering throne.

See it flame, now it flashes, pours forth—it is done!

Sirens. What marvel of fire in the billows is flashing

That sparkling against one another are crashing?

8475

It beams and hitherward wavers, and bright

All forms are aglow on the pathway of night,

And roundabout all is by fire overrun.

Now Eros be ruler who all hath begun!

Hail, ye waves! Hail, sea unbounded,

8480

By the holy fire surrounded!

Water, hail! Hail, fire's glare!

Hail to this adventure rare!

All Together.

Hail, thou gently blowing breeze!

Hail, earth rich in mysteries!

8485

Hail, fire, sea, whom we adore,

Hail, ye elements all four!

ACT III

BEFORE THE PALACE OF MENELAUS IN SPARTA

HELENA. PANTHALIS, LEADER OF THE CHORUS.

HELENA enters with a CHORUS of captive Trojan women.

Helena. I, much admired and much upbraided Helena,
 Come from the strand where we but now have disembarked,
 Still giddy from the restless rocking of the waves 8490
 Which with Poseidon's favour and the strength of Eurys bore
 Us on their high reluctant backs from Phrygia's plain
 Returning to our native bays and fatherland.
 There on the shore with all his bravest warriors
 King Menelaus knows the joy of safe return. 8495
 But thou, O lofty dwelling, bid me welcome now,
 Thou whom, when he came home again from Pallas' hill,
 My father Tyndareus built near the slope and then
 Adorned supremely, more than all of Sparta's homes,
 The while, as sisters do, with Clytemnestra I— 8500
 With Castor, Pollux too—grew up in happy play.
 And ye, wings of the brazen portal, you I hail!
 Yet wider once ye opened to greet a welcome guest
 When Menelaus, one from many singled out,
 Shone as a radiant bridegroom there before my gaze. 8505
 Open thy wings again that I the king's behest
 May faithfully fulfil as doth become the wife.
 Let me go in and everything remain behind
 That hitherto hath stormed about me, threatening doom.
 For since, by care untroubled, I departed hence 8510
 For Cytherea's fane, as sacred duty bade,
 And there a robber seized me, he, the Phrygian,
 Since then has happened much that mankind far and wide
 So fain relate but not so fain is heard by him
 Of whom the waxing legend hath a fable spun. 8515

Chorus.

O lady glorious, do not disdain
 Honoured possession of highest estate!
 For to thee alone is the greatest boon given:
 The fame of beauty transcending all else.
 The hero's name resounds ere he comes, 8520
 Hence proudly he strides,
 Yet bows at once the stubbornest man
 At the throne of Beauty, the all-conquering.

Helena. Enough! I've sailed together with my consort here
 And now before him to his city am I sent; 8525

But what intent he harbours, that I can not guess.
 Do I come here as wife? do I come here as queen?
 Come I as victim for the prince's bitter pain
 And for the adverse fate the Greeks endured so long?
 Conquered I am but whether captive I know not! 8530
 For truly the immortal gods ambiguously
 Ordained my fame and fate, attendants dubious
 For Beauty's person; and on this very threshold now
 They stand in gloomy threatening presence at my side.
 For rarely did my husband cast a glance at me 8535
 There in the hollow ship, nor spake he heartening word.
 As if he brooded mischief, facing me he sat.
 But now when drawing near Eurotas' ¹ deep-bayed shore
 The foremost ships scarce touched their beaks against the land
 In greeting, he spake as if by Zeus himself inspired: 8540
 "Here will my warriors in due order disembark;
 I'll muster them drawn up along the ocean-strand,
 But thou, proceed, go up Eurotas' holy stream
 Along its fruit-abounding shore, and ever on,
 Guiding the coursers on the moist, bejewelled mead, 8545
 Until what time thou comest to the beauteous plain
 Where Lacedæmon, once a wide and fruitful field,
 By solemn mountains close-engirdled, has been built.
 Then enter in the lofty-towered, princely house
 And muster me the maids whom there I left behind, 8550
 And with them summon too the wise old stewardess.
 Let her display before thee all the treasure-hoard,
 Just as my father left it and what I myself
 Since then have added to the pile in war and peace.
 All wilt thou find there in due order standing, for 8555
 It is the prince's privilege on coming home
 That he find all in faithful keeping in his house
 And each thing in its place just as he left it there.
 For of himself the slave has power to alter naught."

Chorus.

Now quicken with the glorious wealth, 8560
 The ever-increased, thine eyes and thy breast;
 For the grace of chain, the glory of crown,
 Rest in their pride and hold themselves rare;
 But enter in and challenge them all.
 They quickly will arm. 8565
 I joy in the conflict when beauty vies
 With gold and with pearls and with jewels of price.

Helena. Thereafter followed further mandate from my lord:

"Now when thou hast reviewed in order everything,
 Then take as many tripods as thou thinkst to need 8570

¹Eurotas: the chief river of Lacedæmon.

And vessels manifold which for the sacrifice
 The priest desires when he performs the sacred rite,
 The cauldrons and the bowls, the round and shallow plate;
 The purest water from the holy fountain be
 At hand in ewers high, and ready keep dry wood 8575
 As well, that rapidly accepts and feeds the flame;
 And be not wanting finally a sharpened knife.
 But to thy care alone I now resign the rest."
 So spake he, urging me be gone, but not a thing
 That breathes with life did he, the orderer, appoint 8580
 Which he, to honour the Olympians, wishes slain.
 Dubious it is, but further worry I dismiss,
 And let all be committed to the lofty gods
 Who evermore fulfil as seemeth good to them;
 Men may esteem it evil or esteem it good, 8585
 But we who are but mortals must accept and bear.
 Ere now full oft the sacrificing priest has raised
 The heavy axe to consecrate the earth-bowed beast
 And yet he could not finish it, for he was checked
 By nearing foes or by an intervening god. 8590

Chorus.

Thou canst not imagine what will come next;
 Queen, we beg, enter and be
 Of good cheer.
 Evil and good still come
 Unexpected to mortals; 8595
 Though foretold, we credit it not.
 Truly, did Troy burn; truly, we saw
 Death before us, shamefullest death;
 And are we not here
 Joined with thee, serving gladly, 8600
 Seeing the dazzling sun in the heavens,
 Also thee, the earth's fairest,
 Gracious to us happy ones?

Helena. Be it as it may! What may impend, me it beseems
 That I at once ascend into the royal house, 8605
 The long-renounced, much yearned-for, well-nigh forfeited,
 Which stands again before mine eyes, I know not how.
 My feet do not with so much spirit bear me up
 The high steps I sped over lightly as a child.

Exit.

Chorus.

Cast now, O sisters, ye
 Captives who mourn your fate,
 All your sorrows far from you;
 Share in our mistress' joy,
 Share ye in Helena's joy, 8610

Who to her father's hearth and house 8615
 —True, with tardily homeward-turned
 But with so much the firmer foot—
 Draweth joyfully nearer.

Praise ye the ever holy,
 Happy establishing 8620
 And home-bringing Immortals!
 How the unfettered one
 Soars as on eagle-wings
 Over the roughest! while in vain
 Doth the sad captive yearningly 8625
 Over the prison's high parapets
 Spread his arms abroad and pine.

But a god laid hold on her,
 Her the exile,
 And from Ilion's ruins 8630
 Hither he bore her again
 To the ancient, the newly adorned
 Father-house,
 From unspeakable
 Raptures and torments, 8635
 Days of early youth
 New-refreshed to remember.

Panthalis [as leader of the CHORUS].

But now forsake ye the joy-encompassed path of song
 And turn your gaze toward the portal's open wings.
 Sisters, what do I see? Does not the Queen return 8640
 Again to us here with swift and agitated step?
 What is it, O great Queen, that here within the halls
 Of this thy house, instead of greeting from thine own,
 Could meet and shake thee thus? Conceal' it thou canst not;
 For on that brow of thine I see aversion writ, 8645
 A noble anger that is battling with surprise.

Helena [who has left the wings of the door open, agitated].

A vulgar fear beseemeth not the child of Zeus,
 No lightly fleeting hand of terror touches her;
 But that grim Fright, that from the womb of ancient Night
 Rose at the first beginning and still multiform, 8650
 Like glowing clouds out of the mountain's fiery throat,
 Rolls upward, might make even heroes' breasts to quake.
 In such appalling wise today the Stygians
 Have marked my entrance to the house that I am fain
 To leave this threshold often trod and wished-for long, 8655
 Turning my steps away as of a guest dismissed.
 But no! I have retreated hither to the light
 And ye'll not drive me further, Powers, be who ye may!
 I'll plan some consecration and then, purified,
 May glowing hearth bid lord and mistress welcome home. 8660

Leader of the CHORUS. Disclose, O noble lady, to thy serving-maids,

To us who aid and honour thee, what has occurred.

Helena. What I have seen, ye too with your own eyes shall see

Unless old Night indeed has forthwith swallowed up

Her creature in the fearful depths of her dark womb.

8665

But yet that ye may know, I'll tell it you in words.

When through the sombre courtyard of the royal house

I stepped with reverence, my nearest task in mind,

I marvelled at the drear and silent corridors.

No sound of busy going to and fro fell on

8670

Mine ear, no diligent swift hasting met my gaze.

Before me there appeared no maid, no stewardess,

They who are wont to greet each stranger as a friend,

But when I now drew near to the bosom of the hearth,

Beside the tepid glimmering embers there I saw

8675

What huge, veiled form! a woman seated on the ground,

Not like to one asleep but one far lost in thought.

With sharp, commanding words I summon her to work,

Supposing her the stewardess whom there perhaps

My husband prudently had stationed ere he left;

8680

But in her mantle's folds she still sits motionless;

And only at my threat her right arm doth she move,

As if from hearth and hall she'd motion me away.

Angry I turn from her and forthwith hasten on

Toward the steps on which aloft the thalamos¹

8685

Rises adorned, the treasure-chamber near thereto;

But swiftly now the monster starts up from the floor,

Imperiously it bars the way to me and shows

Its haggard height, its hollow eyes bedimmed with blood,

A form so strange, such as confuses eye and mind.

8690

Yet to the winds I speak, for all in vain do words

Essay to build up forms as if they could create.

There see herself! She even ventures forth to light!

Here we are master till the lord and monarch comes.

The grisly births of night doth Phoebus, Beauty's friend,

8695

Drive far away to caverns or he binds them fast.

PHORKYAS appears on the sill between the door-posts.

Chorus.

Much have I lived through, although my tresses

In youthful fashion flow round my temples!

Many the horrors that I have witnessed,

Woe of dire warfare, Ilion's night

8700

When it fell.

Through the beclouded, dust-raising tumult,

Warriors crowding, I heard th' Immortals

Terribly shouting, I heard the brazen

Accents of Strife that clanged through the field

8705

¹Sleeping-chamber.

Rampart-ward.

Ah, still standing were Ilion's
Ramparts then, but the glowing flames
Soon from neighbour to neighbour ran,
Hence and thence spreading out 8710
With the gust itself had made
Over the city in darkness.

Fleeing I saw through smoke and glow
And the fluttering tongues of flame
Ghastly presences, wrathful gods, 8715
Wondrous forms, great as giants,
Striding on through sinister
Vapours illumined by fire.

Saw I this or was it my
Mind that, anguish-torn, bodied forth 8720
Such made confusion? I'll never say
That it was, but yet that I
See with mine eyes this horrid thing,
Certainly this I do know;
I could indeed lay hold on it, 8725
But that fear is restraining me,
From the perilous keeps me.

Which one of Phorkys'
Daughters, then, art thou?
For to that family 8730
Thee would I liken.
Art thou perchance of those born hoary,
With but one eye and but one tooth,
Sharing them alternately,
Art thou one of the Graiæ? 8735

Darest thou, monster,
Here beside beauty
Under the eye of great
Phoebus to show thee?
Come, only step forth, notwithstanding, 8740
For the hideous sees he not,
As his holy eye has not
Yet alighted on shadow.

But a sorrowful adverse fate
Us poor mortals doth force, alas! 8745
To the unspeakable pain of eyes
Which the detestable, ever accursed, on
Beauty's lovers doth still inflict.

Yea, then hearken, if thou darest
Meet and defy us, hear the curse, 8750
Hear the menace of each rebuke,
Out of the cursing mouths of the happy ones
Formed and fashioned by very gods.

- Phorkyas.* Old is the word, yet high and true remains the sense,
 That Modesty and Beauty never, hand in hand,
 Pursue their way along the verdant paths of earth. 8755
 Deep-rooted dwells in both of them an ancient hate,
 That wheresoever on the way they chance to meet,
 Each on the other turns her back in enmity.
 Then each one hastens on with greater vehemence, 8760
 Modesty sad but Beauty insolent of mood,
 Till Orcus' hollow night at last envelops them,
 Unless old age has fettered them before that time.
 You find I now, ye wantons, here from foreign lands,
 Your insolence outpouring, like a flight of cranes 8765
 Proceeding high overhead with hoarse and shrilling screams,
 A drawn-out cloud that earthward sends its croaking tones,
 Which lure the quiet wanderer to lift his gaze
 And look at them; but they fly onward on their way,
 He goes on his, and so with us too will it be. 8770
- Who are ye then, that round the high house of the king
 Like Mænads wild or like Bacchantes dare to rave?
 Who are ye then to meet the house's stewardess
 With howling as a pack of dogs howls at the moon?
 Dream ye 'tis hidden from me of what race ye are, 8775
 Thou callow, war-begotten, slaughter-nurtured brood?
 Man-crazy, thou, seducing as thou art seduced,
 Wasting the strength of warrior and of burgher too.
 To see you in your crowd, a swarm of locusts seems
 To have swooped down, hiding the verdant harvest-field. 8780
 Devourers, ye, of others' toil! Ye parasites,
 Destroyers, in the bud, of all prosperity,
 Thou ravished merchandise, bartered and marketed!
- Helena.* Who in the presence of the mistress chides the maids,
 Doth boldly overstep the mistress' household right; 8785
 For her alone 'tis meet to praise the laudable
 As it is hers to punish what there is to blame.
 And I am well contented with the service that
 They rendered when the lofty power of Ilion
 Beleaguered stood and fell and lay, and not the less 8790
 When on our erring course the grievous, changeful woe
 We bore, where commonly each thinks but of himself.
 Here also I expect the like from this blithe throng;
 Not what the slave is, asks the lord, but how he serves.
 Therefore be silent, grin and jeer at them no more. 8795
 Hast thou the palace of the king kept well till now,
 In place of mistress, to thy credit shall it stand;
 But now that she has come in person, step thou back
 Lest punishment be thine, not merited reward.
- Phorkyas.* To threaten her domestics doth remain the right 8800
 The which the heaven-blest ruler's lofty consort earned

Indeed through many a year of prudent governance.

Since thou, now recognized, dost tread thine ancient place

Anew and once again as mistress and as Queen,

Lay hold upon the reins long-slackened, govern now,

8805

Take in thy keep the treasure, all of us thereto.

But first of all protect me now, the older one,

Against this crowd that by thy swan-like beauty are

Only a meanly-winged lot of cackling geese.

Leader of the CHORUS. How ugly, near to beauty, ugliness appears! 8810

Phorkyas. How senseless, near to wisdom, seems the want of sense!

From here on, members of the CHORUS respond in turn, stepping forth singly from the CHORUS.

The First Chorister. Of Father Erebus tell us, tell us of Mother Night!

Phorkyas. Then speak of Scylla, thine own flesh's kith and kin!

The Second Chorister.

There's many a monstrous shoot on thine ancestral tree.

Phorkyas. Away to Orcus! There seek out thy kindred tribe!

8815

The Third Chorister.

They who dwell there, in sooth, are far too young for thee.

Phorkyas. Go to Tiresias the Old, make love to him!

The Fourth Chorister.

Great-great-granddaughter to thee was Orion's nurse.

Phorkyas. Harpies, I fancy, fed thee up on filthiness.

The Fifth Chorister.

With what dost nourish thou such cherished meagreness?

8820

Phorkyas. 'Tis not with blood for which thou all too lustful art!

The Sixth Chorister. Greedy for corpses, thou, a loathsome corpse thyself!

Phorkyas. The teeth of vampires glitter in thy shameless maw.

Leader of the CHORUS. That maw of thine I'll stop if I say who thou art.

Phorkyas. First do thou name thyself! The riddle then is solved. 8825

Helena. Not angry but in sorrow I step in between,

Forbidding all such turbulent alternate strife!

For naught more harmful can befall the ruling lord

Than faithful servants' secret festering dispute.

The echo of his commands returneth then no more

8830

To him in swift accomplished deed accordingly.

No! roaring wilfully around him raves the storm

While he, himself bewildered, chides, but all in vain.

Not this alone! Ye have in wrath unmannerly

Evoked the dreadful figures of unhallowed forms

8835

Which crowd around me till I feel me torn away

To Orcus in despite of these my native fields.

Is it memory? Was it delusion seized on me?

Was I all that? and am? shall I in future be

The phantom horrible of town-destroying men?

8840

The maidens shudder, but the eldest, thou, I see,
Dost stand unmoved. Speak to me then some word of sense!

Phorkyas. Who many years of fortune manifold recalls,
To him divinest favour seems at last a dream.

But thou, so highly favoured, past all bound and aim, 8845
Sawst midst the living only men inflamed by love,
Quick kindled to each kind of boldest enterprise.

Thus Theseus, roused by greed, laid hands upon thee first,
A man of glorious form, as strong as Heracles.

Helena. He bore me off, a ten-year-old and slender roe, 8850
And shut me in 'Aphidnus' tower in Attica.

Phorkyas. But then by Castor and by Pollux soon released,
Thou wert engirt by chosen heroes courting thee.

Helena. Yet most my secret favour—as I own with joy— 8855
Patroclus won; he was Pelides' counterpart.

Phorkyas. Thy father wedded thee to Menelaus, though,
The bold sea-rover and sustainer of his house.

Helena. To him he gave his daughter, gave the kingdom's sway,
And from our marriage union sprang Hermione.

Phorkyas. But whilst afar he wrested heritage in Crete, 8860
To thee, left solitary, came too fair a guest.

Helena. Wherefore recall that time of semi-widowhood?
And hideous ruin that sprang out of it for me?

Phorkyas. That voyage for me too, a free-born maid of Crete, 8865
Brought hateful capture, brought me lasting slavery.

Helena. At once he did install thee here as stewardess,
Entrusting much, castle and treasure boldly won.

Phorkyas. Which thou forsookst, turning to Ilion's tower-girt town,
Lured by the joys of love, the inexhaustible.

Helena. Remind me not of joyance! An infinity 8870
Of all too bitter woe perfused by breast and brain.

Phorkyas. Yet men say thou appeardst a phantom duplicate,
In Ilion beheld, in Egypt too wert seen.

Helena. Confuse not wholly my distraught and clouded mind. 8875
Here even, who I am indeed, I do not know.

Phorkyas. And, then, they say: from out the hollow realm of shades
Achilles, fired by passion, joined himself to thee!

Who earlier loved thee spite of all decrees of fate.

Helena. To him the phantom I a phantom bound myself.
It was a dream, indeed the words themselves say so. 8880

I vanish hence, become a phantom to myself.

Sinks into the arms of half of the CHORUS.

Chorus.

Silence, silence!

False seeing one, false speaking one, thou!
From such horrible, single-toothed mouth,
What will breathe forth from it, 8885
Such a fearful and loathsome gorge?

For the malignant, benevolent appearing,
 Wolfish wrath under sheep's woolly fleece,
 To me is more terrible far than Hell's
 Three-headed monster's gullet. 8890

Anxious, watching, we stand here,
 When, how, where will it break forth,
 Lurking monster,

Lurking deeply with malice so great?
 Well, then, instead of word freighted with comfort, 8895

Lethe-sprinkling, most mild, friendly and fair,
 Stirrest thou up more of the past's worst ills
 Than of the good we suffered,

And thou darken'st at once
 Both the present moment's sheen 8900

And the future's
 Kindly glimmering light of hope.

Silence, silence!

That the soul of our lady,
 Even now ready to flee, 8905

Still may hold fast, hold firmly
 Loveliest form, the form of all forms,
 On which the sunlight ever has shone.

HELENA has revived and again stands in the centre.

Phorkyas.

From the floating clouds move forward now, high sun of this bright
 day,

When veiled, thou didst us enrapture; blinding now in splendour
 reign! 8910

As the world looks bright before thee, dost thou look with lovely
 gaze.

Though as ugly they revile me, well I know the beautiful.

Helena. Tottering from out the void which in my swoon engirdled
 me,

Gladly would I rest again, for so weary are my limbs;

But for queens it is becoming—yea, all men it doth become— 8915

To compose one's self, take courage, whatsoever threat astound.

Phorkyas. Standing in thy greatness, in thy beauty here and now,

If thy glance says thou commandest, what dost thou command?

Declare!

Helena.

For your strife's neglect disgraceful be prepared to make amends;

Haste a sacrifice to order as the king commanded me. 8920

Phorkyas. In the house is all now ready: bowl and tripod, sharpened
 axe,

For the sprinkling, for the incense; show the destined sacrifice.

Helena. That the king did not determine.

Phorkyas. Spake it not? Oh, word of
 woe!

Helena. What the woe that overcomes thee?

Phorkyas. Queen, it is thyself art meant.

Helena. I?

Phorkyas. And these.

Chorus. Oh, woe and sorrow!

Phorkyas. Thou wilt fall beneath the axe.

8925

Helena. Frightfull yet foreboded! Ah, mel

Phorkyas. Unavoidable it seems.

Chorus. Ah! and us? What will befall us?

Phorkyas. She will die a noble death;

But within from lofty rafters which support the gabled roof,
Like the thrushes in a bird-trap, ye shall dangle in a row.

HELENA and the CHORUS stand, astounded and frightened, in a significant, well-arranged group.

Phorkyas.

Phantoms! . . . Like forms grown rigid are ye standing there,

8930

Fearing to quit the life to which ye have no claim.

Men likewise—all of them are phantoms just as ye—

Renounce not willingly the glorious shining sun.

Yet no one begs them free or saves them from the end.

All know it well, and nevertheless it pleases few.

8935

Enough, ye all are lost! So quickly to the work!

PHORKYAS claps her hands; thereupon masked dwarfish figures appear at the door who execute at once and with alacrity the commands which PHORKYAS utters.

Hither, thou swarthy, roly-poly, goblin throng,

Trundle along, there's harm to do here as one will.

The altar, golden-horned, bring forth and give it place,

And let the glittering axe lie on the silver rim;

8940

Fill all the water-jugs that one can wash away

The black gore's horrible, polluting blemishment.

Spread out the carpet sumptuously here in the dust

That so the victim may kneel down in royal wise

And in it wrapped at once, although with severed head,

8945

May still be sepulchred with fitting dignity.

Leader of the CHORUS.

The Queen, absorbed in thought, is standing at one side,

The maidens wither like to new-mown meadow grass;

Methinks that I, the eldest, by sacred duty bound,

Should speak a word with thee, thou primal eldest one.

8950

Thou art experienced, wise, seem'st well disposed to us,

Although this brainless troop, misjudging, struck at thee.

Say, then, what rescue thou mayst know as possible.

Phorkyas. 'Tis easy said! Upon the queen alone it rests

If she will save herself, you adjuncts too with her.

8955

Determination's needful and the speediest.

Chorus. Most revered of all the Parcæ, wisest of the sibyls, thou,
 Hold the golden shears wide open, then proclaim us life and health;
 For we feel our precious limbs already swinging, swaying, dangling
 Undelightfully, for they in dancing rather would delight them, 8960
 Resting then on lover's breast.

Helena. Let these be anxious! Pain I feel but naught of fear;
 But if thou know'st of rescue, grateful be 't received.
 For to the wise, far-seeing, oft in very truth
 Impossible still seems possible. Then speak, say on! 8965

Chorus. Speak and tell us, tell us quickly: how we may escape the
 awful,
 Odious nooses that so threaten as the very vilest necklace,
 Drawing round our throats. Now in advance we feel it, we poor
 victims,
 Feel the choking, stifling, unless thou, O Rhea, lofty mother
 Of all gods, hast pity on us. 8970

Phorkyas. Have ye the patience silently to hear my whole,
 Long-drawn-out discourse? It involves tales manifold.

Chorus. Patience enough! The while we listen we still live.

Phorkyas. If one remains at home and noble treasure guards
 And knows how to cement the lofty dwelling's walls
 And to secure the roof against the pressing rain,
 It will go well with him all his long days of life;
 But he who over his threshold's sacred limits steps
 With light and fleeting foot in buoyant wantonness,
 Will find indeed on his return the ancient place 8980
 But all things changed about, if they're not quite destroyed.

Helena. Whereto the like of such familiar sayings here?
 Thou wouldst narrate, so stir not up what gives offence!

Phorkyas. It is historical, by no means a reproach.
 A corsair, Menelaus steered from bay to bay;
 The shores and islands all he skirted as a foe, 8985
 Returning with the spoils that in his house abound.
 Besieging Ilion, he then passed ten long years;
 How many on the voyage home I do not know.
 But how stand matters here with the exalted house 8990
 Of Tyndareus? How stand they roundabout the realm?

Helena. So thoroughly incarnate in thee is abuse
 That not a lip of thine can stir without rebuke?

Phorkyas. Full many years forsaken stood the valleyed hills
 Which northward back of Sparta rise into the sky, 8995
 Taygetus in the rear whence as a merry brook
 Eurotas tumbles down and then along our vale
 By reed-beds broadly flowing nourishes your swans.
 Remote and still in mountain-vale a valiant race
 Has settled, pressing hither from Cimmerian night, 9000
 And piled a towering stronghold insurmountable.
 From there they pester land and people as they please.

Helena. Could they accomplish this? It seems impossible.

Phorkyas. They had the time, perhaps 'twas nearly twenty years.

Helena. Is one the lord? and are they many robbers? leagued? 9005

Phorkyas. They are not robbers and yet one of them is lord.

I blame him not and though he persecuted me.

Well could he all have taken but contented him

With few things which he called not tribute but free gifts.

Helena. How does he look?

Phorkyas. Not ill! I like his looks full well. 9010

He is a man who's cheery, bold, of well-built form,

A man of sense such as are few among the Greeks.

Men brand these people as barbarians, yet methinks

Not one so cruel, not so like a cannibal

As many a hero proved himself at Ilion. 9015

His greatness I respect, I'd trust myself to him.

His castle too! With your own eyes ye should see that!

It is quite different from the clumsy masonry

Which your forefathers loosely piled up heedlessly,

Cyclopean like the Cyclops, hurling undressed stone, 9020

One on the other. There, contrariwise, ah, there!

The work is level, plumb, according to a rule.

Gaze at it from outside! It strives aloft toward heaven,

All rigid, all well-joined, and mirror-smooth like steel!

To climb there—why, the very thought slides down! 9025

And inside are great courts and roomy spaces girt

By structures roundabout of every kind and use.

There ye see arches, archlets, pillars, pillarets,

Balconies, galleries for gazing out and in,

And scutcheons.

Chorus. What are scutcheons?

Phorkyas. Ajax used to bear 9030

A coiling serpent on his shield, as ye have seen.

The Seven against Thebes, each one upon his shield,

A pictured emblem bore, rich in significance.

One saw there moon and stars in heaven's nocturnal field,

A goddess, hero, ladder, swords, and torches too, 9035

And all that fiercely threatens good towns with violence.

Such emblems are borne also by our hero-band,

Aglow with colour, heritage from primal sires.

There ye see lions, eagles, also claw and beak,

Then horns of buffaloes, wings, roses, peacocks' tails, 9040

Bars also, gold and black and silver, blue and red.

The like of these hangs there in halls, row after row,

In long, unending halls, wide as the world is wide.

There ye can dance!

Chorus. Oh, say, are dancers also there?

Phorkyas. The best! a blooming troop of boys with golden 9045
locks,

Fragrant with youth, so fragrant only Paris was
When he approached too near the Queen.

Helena. Thou fallest quite
Outside thy role! Come, tell me now the final word!

Phorkyas. Speak thou that word, say plainly and in earnest: "Yes!"
Then with that castle I'll encompass thee at once. 9050

Chorus. Oh, speak that little word and save thyself with us!

Helena. What? Must I fear King Menelaus will transgress
In ways so horrible and do me so much wrong?

Phorkyas. Hast thou forgot how thy Deïphobus he maimed,
Brother of war-slain Paris? In unheard-of ways 9055
He maimed him who for thee, when a widow, stubborn fought
And happily won as mistress. Nose and ears he lopped
And mangled him still worse: a horror to behold.

Helena. That did he unto him; for my sake did he that.

Phorkyas. And he will do the same to thee because of him. 9060
Beauty cannot be shared; who has possessed it quite,
Destroys it rather, cursing all part ownership.

Trumpets at a distance; the CHORUS shudders.

Just as shrill trumpets' blare lays hold with rending might
On ears and bowels, jealousy doth clinch its claws
Within the bosom of a man forgetting not 9065
What once he has owned and now has lost and owns no more.

Chorus.

Hear'st thou not the horn resounding? Dost not see the weapon's
flash?

Phorkyas. Be thou welcome, lord and monarch, gladly give I
reckoning.

Chorus. Ah, but we?

Phorkyas. Ye know it well, before your eyes ye'll see her
death.

Mark, your own will be within there. No, there is no help for you. 9070
Pause.

Helena. I have thought out what first I dare to venture on.

Thou art a hostile dæmon, this I feel full well

And fear that into evil thou wilt turn the good.

But first to yonder castle I will follow thee.

The rest I know; but what thereby in her deep breast 9075

The Queen mysteriously may hide, be that for each

A secret inaccessible. On, Ancient, lead! "

Chorus.

Oh, how glad do we go hence,

Hast'ning our footsteps,

Death in our rear, 9080

And before us again

A towering stronghold's

Inaccessible ramparts.

Grant they may shelter as well

As once did Ilion's walls,

Which fell down at last

Through contemptible craft alone!

Mists spread out, veil the background and now the foreground at pleasure.

How is this? How?

Sisters, gaze around!

Was not serene sunlight here?

Drifts of cloud are swaying aloft

From Eurotas' sacred stream;

Vanished has the beautiful

Reed-engarlanded shore from our sight,

And the swans gliding on

Freely, gracefully, proudly,

Swimming glad together,

Ah, I see them no more!

Still, though, yes, still

Crying I hear them,

Crying afar their hoarse cry!

Death presaging, so mortals say;

Ah, that only to us too,

Instead of promised salvation's weal,

Doom at last it proclaim not to us,

Doom to us swan-like maids,

Fair, white-throated ones, and ah!

To her, our swan-begotten!

Woe to us, woe! woe!

All is covered and hid

Roundabout in the mist.

We can see each other no more!

What befalls? Do we move?

Float we only,

Footing uncertainly on the ground?

Sec'st thou naught? Wings not haply e'en

Hermes ahead? Gleams not his golden wand

Waving, commanding us backward again

To the unenjoyable, grey-glimmering,

With impalpable phantoms teeming,

Over-crowded, ever empty Hades?

Yes, 'tis growing darker swiftly; lifts the mist but leaves no
sunlight,

Darkly-greyish, brown as walls are. Walls encounter our free
vision.

Standing stark against our seeing. Is it a court? Is it a dungeon?

Horrible in any case! Sisters, alas, we are imprisoned,

Prisoned as we ever were.

THE INNER COURT OF THE CASTLE

Surrounded by rich, fantastic buildings of the Middle Ages.

Leader of the CHORUS. Impetuous and foolish, perfect woman-type!
 Dependent on the moment, sport of every breeze
 Of good and evil fortune, neither this nor that
 Can ye with calmness bear. One always contradicts 9130
 The other fiercely, and crosswise the others her;
 In joy and pain alone ye howl and laugh alike.
 Now hush! and waiting hearken what the mistress may,
 High-spirited, resolve both for herself and us.

Hclena. Where art thou, Pythoness? Whatever be thy name, 9135
 Come from the vaulted chambers of this gloomy keep.
 If haply thou art gone to the wondrous hero-lord,
 Announcing me, preparing fit reception thus,
 Then take my thanks and lead me speedily to him;
 I wish an end of wandering. Rest alone I wish. 9140

Leader of the CHORUS.
 In vain, O Queen, thou lookst around on every side;
 That sorry form has vanished, has remained perhaps
 There in the mist from out whose bosom hitherward
 We came, I know not how, but swift and treading not.
 Perhaps she too in doubt strays in this labyrinth 9145
 Of many castles strangely mingled into one,
 Seeking the lord that he may princely welcome thee.
 But see up there a crowd of servants stirring now
 In corridors, past windows, and in wide doorways,
 Hast'ning in ready service, swiftly, to and fro: 9150
 A portent of distinguished welcome for a guest.

Chorus.
 My heart is exalted! See, oh, see there
 How so modestly downward with lingering step
 The fairest of youths becoming move 9155
 In appointed procession. At whose command
 Can appear, so well-taught and so fitly arrayed,
 Of youthful squires this glorious troop?
 What most do I admire? The delicate gait,
 Perhaps the curling hair round the dazzling white brow,
 Perhaps the pair of cheeks like the red of the peach 9160
 And clad like the peach with soft, fleecy down?
 I gladly would bite them but shudder in fear,
 For in similar case was the mouth all filled up—
 Oh, horrible tale!—with ashes.

And now the fairest 9165
 Are coming along;
 What is it they bear?
 Steps for a throne,

Carpet and seat,
 Hangings and tent— 9170
 Similar gear;
 Now it rolls over,
 Wreathing cloud-like festoons
 Round the head of our Queen,
 Who now, invited, 9175
 Has climbed to the glorious couch.
 Forward advance,
 Step upon step, stand
 Gravely aligned.
 Worthy, oh, worthy, threefold worthy 9180
 Of her may such a welcome be blessed!

All that the CHORUS describes occurs by degrees.

FAUST.

After the boys and squires have descended in a long procession, FAUST appears above on the staircase in the knightly court costume of the Middle Ages; he descends slowly and with dignity.

Leader of the CHORUS [observing him attentively].

If to this man the gods have not, as oft they do,
 Lent only for a brief time admirable form,
 His amiable presence, his exalted mien,
 All transitory, then will he ever succeed 9185
 In what he undertakes, be it in fights with men
 Or in the little war with fairest women waged.
 Indeed to many others he may be preferred,
 Others whom high-esteemed I've seen with mine own eyes.
 With slowly solemn step restrained by reverence 9190
 I see the prince approaching. Turn and see, O Queen!

Faust [approaching with a fettered man at his side].

In lieu of solemn greeting, as were fitting,
 In lieu of reverent welcome, I bring thee
 This servant fettered fast in manacles,
 Whose slight of duty made me slight mine own. 9195
 Before this noble lady kneel thou down,
 To make confession and avow thy guilt.
 Exalted mistress, here thou seest the man
 Of vision rare who on the lofty tower
 Was placed to gaze around, there to survey 9200
 Keenly the firmament and earth's expanse,
 If here and there perchance aught may appear,
 Descending by the hill-encircled vale
 To our firm castle, be it billowing herds,
 Perhaps a marching host; those we protect, 9205
 Meet these in fight. Today, what negligence!
 Thou comest, he reports it not, we fail
 To greet most duly and most honourably

So great a guest. His life he wantonly
 Has forfeited, should lie now in the blood 9210
 Of well-deservèd death; but thou alone
 Mayst punish or mayst pardon, as thou wilt.

Helena. High is the honour that thou grantest me,
 As judge, as ruler, and although it were
 To test me merely, as I may suspect, 9215
 Still, now the judge's foremost duty I
 Will do, to give the accused a hearing. Speak!

Lynceus [*the warder of the tower*].

Let me kneel and gaze upon her,
 Let me live or let me perish,
 Since my all I only cherish 9220
 For this god-sent lady's honour.

Waiting for the bliss of morning,
 Spying eastward its first glows,
 Lo! the sun, without a warning,
 Wondrous in the south arose. 9225

Thither did it draw my glances
 Off from gorge and mountain-cone,
 Off from earth's and heaven's expanses,
 Her to see, the Only One.

Piercing sight to me is given 9230
 As to lynx on highest tree,
 Yet I had to struggle, even
 As from dream's obscurity.

Could I the delusion banish?
 Ramparts? tower? or bolted gate? 9235
 Vapours rise and vapours vanish,
 Such a goddess comes in state!

Eye and bosom I turned to her,
 Drinking in her gentle light:
 Beauty, blinding all that view her, 9240
 Blinded my poor senses quite.

I forgot the warder's duty
 And the horn I swore to wind.
 Threaten to destroy me! Beauty
 Doth all anger ever bind. 9245

Helena. The ill that I occasioned I dare not
 To punish. Woe is me! That fate austere
 Pursues me, everywhere the breasts of men
 So to infatuate that they themselves
 Spare not nor aught else worthy. Ravishing, 9250
 Seducing, fighting, harrying hither, thither,
 Demigods, heroes, gods, aye, demons also,
 To and fro they led me ever wandering.
 My first estate confused the world, my second

THE SECOND PART, III

225

The more, my third and fourth bring woe on woe.

9255

Remove this good man, let him now go free;

Let no disgrace befall the god-befooled!

Faust. Astonished, I behold alike, O Queen,

The unerring archer and the stricken one;

I see the bow which hath the arrow sped

9260

That wounded him. Arrows on arrows fly,

Me do they smite. Criss-cross through keep and court

I feel their feathered whirring everywhere.

What am I now? The faithfulest thou mak'st

At once rebellious to me, insecure

9265

My walls. And so my army, I fear now,

Obeys the conquering, unconquered Queen.

What else remains save that I give to thee

Myself and all that I have fancied mine?

Freely and truly let me at thy feet

9270

Acknowledge thee as Queen who by her coming

Acquired at once possession and a throne.

Lynceus [with a chest and men who carry chests after him].

O Queen, thou see'st me back again!

The rich man begs one glance's gain;

Poor as a beggar feelth he

9275

And princely rich when he sees thee.

What was I erst? and what now too?

What is to wish for? what to do?

What use is sharpest flash of eyes!

Back from thy throne it bounding flies.

9280

Out of the East we hither pressed

And all was over with the West;

A people far and wide were massed,

The foremost knew not of the last.

The first man fell, the second stood,

9285

The third man's lance was prompt and good;

Each one was backed a hundredfold,

Thousands, unmarked, lay slain and cold.

We crowded on, stormed on apace,

Masters were we from place to place;

9290

Where for the day I held control

Tomorrow another robbed and stole.

We looked—and hurried was the look;

The fairest woman one man took,

And one the steer both firm and strong,

9295

And every horse must come along,

But I delighted to espy

The things most rare to human eye,

And what another man possessed,

For me was dried-up grass at best.

9300

Upon the trail of treasures bright,

I followed only my keen sight;
At every pocket I peeped in,
Transparent was each box and bin.

And heaps of gold I made my own, 9305
And many a lordly precious stone.
Now on thy breast the emerald green
Alone is worthy to be seen.

Now swaying 'twixt thy lip and ear
Let ocean's oval pearl appear; 9310
Rubies would all their radiance lose
Beside thy glowing cheek's bright hues.

The treasure greatest and most rare
Before thy presence I lay here;
And to thy feet is brought today 9315
The fruit of many a bloody fray.

As many chests as here I bore,
Of iron chests I have yet more;
Admit me to thy train, I will
Thy vaults with every treasure fill. 9320

For scarce dost thou the throne ascend,
Ere now they bow, ere now they bend,
Intelligence and wealth and power,
Before thy peerless form and flower.

Firmly I held all this as mine, 9325
But now it's free and it is thine;
'Twas precious, sterling, vast, I thought,
But now I see that it was naught.

Vanished is what I once possessed.
A mown and withered grass at best; 9330
Oh, with one happy glance but deign
To give it all its worth again!

Faust. Quickly remove the burden boldly won,
Indeed not censured but without reward.
Already all is hers that in its depths 9335
The castle hides; to offer her aught special
Is useless. Go, pile treasure upon treasure
In order fit. Set up the stately show
Of splendour yet unseen! And let the vaults
Glitter like new-born firmaments, prepare 9340
New paradises filled with lifeless life.
Hastening before her steps let flowered rug
On rug unroll; thus may her every tread
Meet kindly footing, may her gaze alight
On splendour blinding all but the divine. 9345

Lynceus.

Easy are the lord's commands,
Child's-play to the servant's hands:

Beauty in such fair excess
 Rules all wealth, rules blood no less.
 All the army now is tame,
 All the swords are blunt and lame.
 By this glorious form, behold!
 Even the sun seems faint and cold.
 By this wealth of loveliness
 All is empty nothingness.

9350

9355

Exit.

Helena [to FAUST]. I wish to speak to thee; up to my side
 Hither I bid thee come! The empty place
 Calls to its lord and thus makes mine secure.

Faust. First kneeling, let my true devotion gain
 Thy favour, lofty lady; let me kiss
 The gracious hand that lifts me to thy side.
 Confirm me as co-regent of thy realm
 Whose bounds are limitless; win for thyself
 Adorer, servant, guardian, all in one.

9360

Helena. Manifold marvels do I see and hear.
 Amazement strikes me, I would fain ask much,
 But first I'd ask to know why that man's speech
 Sounded so new and strange, strange and yet friendly.
 It seems that one tone makes way for another,
 And hath a word grown friendly to the ear,
 Another woos caressingly the first.

9365

9370

Faust. If thou art pleased with this our people's speech,
 Oh, surely then its song will ravish thee,
 Fill ears and mind alike with deep content.
 But best it were to practise it straightway,
 Alternate speech allures it, calls it forth.

9375

Helena. Then tell me how to learn such lovely speech.

Faust. It's easy, quite, if from the heart it come.
 And when the breast with longing overflow,
 One looks around and asks—

Helena. Who shares the glow.

9380

Faust. The soul looks not ahead in hours like this,
 Nor back; the present only—

Helena. Is our bliss.

Faust. It is a pledge, great gain, possession grand;
 What confirmation has it?

Helena. This, my hand.

Chorus.

Who would think to blame our princess
 If she grants the castle's lord
 Friendly show of favour?
 For confess, we all of us are
 Captives, aye, as oft already
 Since the infamous overthrow

9385

9390

Of Ilion and the agonizing
Labyrinthian woeful journey.

Women, used to men's affection,
Are not choosers, yet they are
Well-informed and knowing, 9395
And to golden-haired shepherds
Or else to fauns with black bristles,
As occasion may bring about,
Over their fair rounded members
Fully grant they an equal right. 9400

Near and nearer they're sitting now,
Leaning one on the other,
Shoulder to shoulder, knee to knee,
Hand in hand, cradle they them
Over the throne's 9405
Richly cushioned magnificence.
Now no scruples has majesty
In its revealing
All its intimate pleasures
Thus before all the eyes of the people. 9410

Helena. I feel so far away and yet so near
And all too glad I say: Here am I! Here!

Faust. I scarcely breathe, words tremble, check their pace;
It is a dream, vanished are time and place.

Helena. I feel I'm lived-out sheer, and yet so new, 9415
Blent with thee here, to thee, the unknown, true.

Faust. Probe not the dower of this rare destiny;
Though life's but an hour, our duty's still to be.

Phorkyas [*entering hastily*].

Spell love's primer through, enjoying
Lovesick brewing, cooing, toying; 9420
Brew and coo on, idle, cloying,
Yet for that 'tis not the day.

Feel ye not a dull storm growing?
Hearken to the trumpet's blowing!
Ruin is not far away. 9425

Menelaus hither urges
All his host in mighty surges.
Arm ye for a bitter fray!
By the victor's host entangled,
As Deïphobus was mangled, 9430

For this gallantry thou'lt pay.
When this trash hangs on a halter,
Straight she'll die upon the altar,
To the sharpened axe a prey.

Faust. Bold interruption! Odious it presses in; 9435

In danger itself I can't stand senseless violence.
 Ill-message uglifies the fairest messenger;
 Only bad messages bringst, ugliest, thou with joy.
 But this time thou shalt not succeed. With empty breath
 Go, shatter thou the air. There is no danger here,
 And even danger itself would seem an idle threat.

9440

*Signals, explosions from the towers, trumpets and cornets. Mar-
 tial music, a powerful armed force marches past.*

Faust.

No, heroes heart-united ever
 Forthwith assembled thou shalt see;
 He only merits women's favour
 Who can protect them valiantly. 9445
*To the leaders of the army who detach themselves from their col-
 umns and step forward.*

With bated, silent fury's power,
 Sure pledge of victory to come,
 Ye, of the North the budding flower,
 Ye, of the East the mighty bloom,
 In steel encased, light round them breaking, 9450
 Hosts that crushed realm on realm at will,
 They come, the very earth is shaking,
 They stride along, it thunders still.

We came to Pylos, there we landed,
 The aged Nestor is no more, 9455
 And all the kinglets thither banded
 Our free hosts routed on the shore.

Back from these walls with voice of thunder
 Drive Menelaus to the sea;
 There let him rove, waylay, and plunder; 9460
 It was his wish and destiny.

I hail you dukes as forth ye sally,
 Such the command of Sparta's Queen;
 Now at her feet lay hill and valley,
 And yours be all the realm ye win. 9465

Thine, German! be to stand defending
 At wall and rampart Corinth's bay.
 Achæa's hundred vales unending
 I bid thee, Goth, to hold and sway.

Toward Elis, march, ye Frankish legions, 9470
 Messenia be the Saxons' gain,
 Ye Normans, clear the ocean's regions
 And great make Argolis again.

Then each, within his walls abiding,
 Will be prepared the foe to meet; 9475
 Sparta, over you all presiding,
 Shall be the Queen's ancestral scat.

She'll see you one and all retrieving

The land whose weal no want can blight,
 Ye at her feet, assured, receiving
 Authority and law and light.

9480

*FAUST descends, the princes form a circle around him in order to
 hear better his commands and instructions.*

Chorus.

Who the fairest one coveteth,
 Be before all things able
 And let him weapons prudently seek.
 Flattering he may win indeed
 What all the earth holds highest;
 But in peace possesseth he not.
 Crafty rogues will entice her from him,
 Robbers boldly will snatch her from him;
 This to prevent let him be on his guard.

9485

9490

Therefore do I praise our prince,
 Prize him higher than others,
 That he, so wise and brave, drew allies
 And the mighty, obeying, stand
 Waiting his every signal.
 Faithfully they fulfil his hest,
 Each for himself, for his own gain
 And the ruler's enguerdoning thanks,
 Both winning thus the supreme meed of fame.

9495

For who will now ravish her
 From the mighty possessor?
 His is she, to him granted be she,
 Granted twofold by us whom he
 Gathered to her, safe within sheltering walls,
 Guarded without by a mighty host.

9500

9505

Faust.

Gifts have I granted, great and glorious,
 To each of these a goodly land,
 Let them march on, through war victorious,
 Here in the midst we take our stand.

And they in rivalry protect thee,
 Half-island, lapped by dancing main,
 While slender, fair, green hills connect thee
 With the last link of Europe's mountain-chain.

9510

This land, the land of lands, forever
 May it be blessed to every race,
 Won for my Queen's enduring favour.
 It early gazed upon her face,

9515

When from the shell she burst and gleaming
 Rose mid Eurotas' reedy sighs,
 On mother, brother, sister beaming
 With light that overcame the eyes.

9520

This land presents its choicest flower

To thee, it turns to thee alone;
 From all the world which owns thy power,
 Oh, choose thy fatherland, thine own! 9525
 And even if the jagged peak uprearing
 Doth on its back the sun's cold arrow bear,
 We see a green tinge on the rock appearing;
 The wild goat nibbling crops his scanty fare.
 Springs leap and plunging brooks unite in revel; 9530
 Already gorges, slopes, and meads are green.
 Upon a hundred hillsides' broken level
 The moving, fleecy herds spread out are seen.
 With measured step, divided, steady,
 Horned beasts draw near the dizzy ledge's fall, 9535
 But shelter for them all is ever ready
 In hundred caves arched in the rocky wall.
 Pan shields them there, enlivening nymphs are
 dwelling
 In bosky chasms' moist, refreshed lee,
 And, yearningly toward higher regions swelling, 9540
 Aloft crowds branch-abounding tree on tree.
 Primeval woods! The mighty oak is standing
 With branch on branch crooked wilfully and bowed;
 The gentle maple, with sweet juice expanding,
 Shoots cleanly upward, playing with its load. 9545
 And in that silent realm of shadows
 Warm mother's milk for child and lambkin wells;
 Fruit is not far, the ripe food of the meadows,
 And honey from the hollowed tree distils.
 Here comfort is the birthright of a nation, 9550
 Both cheek and lips express serenity,
 Each is immortal in his age and station,
 Healthy they live and happily.
 And thus the lovely child develops, gaining
 The father's strength as bright day follows day. 9555
 We marvel, in our minds a doubt remaining
 If they are gods, if men are they.
 Thus was Apollo shepherd-like in feature,¹
 Only the fairest was as fair as he;
 For where in a pure orbit ruleth Nature, 9560
 All worlds unite and blend in harmony.

Taking his seat beside HELENA.

Thus hath success both thee and me attended,
 Now let the past be past, behind us flung;
 Oh, feel thyself from highest god descended,
 Thou of the primal world whence thou art sprung! 9565
 Thee shall no fortress keep in hiding!

¹See Euripides, *Alcestis*, 1. ff.

Still in eternal youth, stands, as it stood,
A wide domain for us, for blissful biding,
Arcadia in Sparta's neighbourhood!

Enticed to dwelling in this blessed harbour,
Hast fled into the brightest destiny!
Now let our thrones become an arbour,
Arcadian be our bliss and free!

9570

THE SCENE CHANGES ALTOGETHER

Closed arbours lean against a series of rocky caverns. A shady grove extends to the surrounding cliff-walls. FAUST and HELENA are not visible. The CHORUS lies sleeping, scattered here and there.

Phorkyas. How long these maidens may have slept I cannot tell.

If they allowed themselves to dream that which mine eyes

9575

Saw bright and clear, that likewise is unknown to me,

And so I'll wake them. This young crowd should be amazed,

Ye long-beards too, who sit and wait down there below

To see at length how wonders credible turn out.

Awake! arise! and quickly shake your curly hair,

9580

Sleep from your eyes! And blink not so, but list to me!

Chorus.

Speak and tell us, tell whatever marvellous events have happened;

Most of all we like to hear of what surpasses our believing,

For we're bored, and greatly bored, from looking only on these
rocks.

Phorkyas.

With your eyes rubbed open scarcely, children, are ye bored so soon? 9585

Hearken then! Here in these caverns, in these grottoes, in these
arbours,

Shield and shelter have been given, as are given to pairs idyllic,

To our lord and to our lady.

Chorus.

How? Within there?

Phorkyas.

Separated

From the world, they summoned me, me only, to their quiet service.

Highly honoured I stood near them, yet, as doth besem the trusted, 9590

Looking around for something else. So I turned me hither, thither,

Seeking roots and barks and mosses, skilled in all things efficacious,

And so they remained alone.

Chorus.

Truly thou dost speak as if within there were vast world-wide
spaces,

Forest, lakes and brooks and meadow; what a fairy tale dost spin! 9595

Phorkyas.

To be sure, ye inexperienced! Those are depths no one hath
fathomed:

Hall on hall and court on court which musingly I followed through.
 But there echoes all at once a laughter through the spacious caverns;
 I look thither, lo! a boy who from the woman's lap is leaping
 To the man, and from the father to the mother; the caressing, 9600
 Dandling, pranks of foolish fondness, cries of fun, and shouts of
 pleasure

Deafen me alternately.

Naked, without wings, a genius, faun-like but with nothing bestial,
 On the firm ground he is leaping, yet the ground, in turn reacting,
 Speeds him up to airy heights, and in the second or the third leap 9605
 Doth he touch the lofty arch.

Anxious calls the mother: "Leap! and leap again, and at thy
 pleasure,

But beware of flying: flight unfettered is denied to thee."

And thus warns the faithful father: "In the earth lies power elastic
 That impels thee upward, only with your toe-tips touch the surface 9610

And at once thou wilt be strengthened like Antæus, son of earth."

And so on these rocky masses he goes skipping from one cornice
 To the other and around, as leaps a ball when it is struck.

All at once, though, in the crevice of a rugged gorge he's vanished,
 And he now seems lost to us. The mother wails, the father comforts, 9615

Anxiously I shrug my shoulders. But again now what a vision!

Are there treasures lying hid there? Garments striped with
 broidered blossoms

He has donned becomingly.

From his arms are tassels waving, round his bosom flutter
 ribbons,

In his hands the golden lyre; completely like a little Phoebus, 9620

He steps boldly to the brink, then to the precipice. We marvel

And the parents in their rapture clasp each other, heart to heart,

For around his head what splendour! It is hard to say what glitters,

Is it gold-work or the flame of some transcendent spirit-power?

And he moves and gestures, even now though but a boy, proclaiming 9625

Him the future master of all beauty, through whose every member

Melodies eternal stir; and thus ye too will hearken to him,

And will see him thus, with wonder ye have never felt before.

Chorus.

Call'st thou a wonder this,

Thou Crete-begotten?

9630

Hast to poetical speech

Pregnant with thought not listened?

Never yet hast heard Ionia's,

Never hast listened to Hellas'

Vast store of tales ancestral

9635

Celebrating gods and heroes?

All that may happen now

While we are living

Reëchoes gloomily

Grandeur of days ancestral;
 Nor can thy narration equal
 That which a lovely fiction,
 More credible than truth is,
 Sang of him, the son of Maia.

Him a delicate babe but strong,
 Nurseling, scarce more than born yet,
 Straight has the nurses' chattering flock,
 Full of unreasoning fancy,
 Wrapped in the purest swaddling-fleece,
 Bound fast in fine, costly wrappings,
 But now the strong, though dainty rogue
 Draws forth his delicate limbs,
 Firm, elastic, and supple,
 Craftily thence, the purple shell,
 Which so grievously bound him,
 Leaving quietly in its place,
 Like the perfected butterfly
 Which from the cramping chrysalis
 Deftly slips with unfolding wings,
 Through the sunlit, radiant ether
 Boldly, wantonly fluttering.

So too did he, the agilest,
 That to thieves and to tricksters
 And all seekers of gain he'd be
 Ever a favouring genius.
 This straightway he makes manifest
 Through most clever devices.
 Swift the trident of ocean's lord
 Steals he, and slyly from Arcs' self
 Steals the sword from the scabbard,
 Arrow and bow from Phoebus too,
 Also the tongs from Hephaestus,
 Even from Zeus the father's bolt
 Would have had, but was frightened by fire.
 Eros too he overcomes
 In a leg-tripping wrestling match,
 And when Cypris caresses him, steals
 From her bosom the girdle.

A charming, purely melodious music of stringed instruments resounds from the cave. All become attentive and soon seem to be deeply stirred. Henceforth to the pause indicated, there is a full musical accompaniment.

Phorkyas.

Hear the loveliest chords resounding,
 Quick, be free from myths long gone,
 And your gods, of old abounding,

THE SECOND PART, III

235

Let them go! Their day is done.

None will understand your singing,
We demand a higher mart;
From the heart it must come springing,
If it hopes to touch the heart.

9685

She retires toward the rocks.

Chorus.

If these witching tones, dire creature,
Find a welcome in thine ears,
We feel healed, of a new nature,
Softened to the joy of tears.

9690

Let the sun's bright splendour perish
If a dawn within us rise,
If in our own hearts we cherish
What the whole wide world denies.

HELENA, FAUST, EUPHORION *in the costume described for him.*

Euphorion.

Hear ye children carols singing,
Ye at once in sport take part;
When ye see my rhythmic springing,
As a parent's leaps your heart.

9695

Helena.

Love, in human wise to bless us,
Makes Two One in sympathy,
But us godlike joy possesses
When Love forms a precious Three.

9700

Faust.

All is found, our love's requited,
I am thine, and mine art thou;
And so stand we here united,
Were it always thus as now!

9705

Chorus.

Many years of purest pleasure
In the mild light of the boy
Crown this pair in plenteous measure.
How their union stirs my joy!

9710

Euphorion.

Let me be skipping,
Let me be springing!
In all the breezes
Through ether winging
Is now my passion;
It hath me won.

9715

Faust.

But gently! gently!
Don't be rash! Check thee
That plunge and death may

Not overtake thee,
That we may not perish
Through our dear son. 9720

Euphorion.

I will no longer
Stand earthly stresses;
Let go my hands,
Let go my tresses, 9725
Let go my garments,
They are all mine.

Helena.

Oh, think—believe us—
To whom thou belongest!
How it would grieve us,
And how thou wrongest 9730
The fair fortune won,
Mine, his, and thine!

Chorus.

The bond, I fear me,
Soon is undone! 9735

Helena and Faust.

Curb, thou tempestuous!
For us who love thee,
Over-impetuous
Forces that move thee! 9740
In rural leisure
Grace thou the plain.

Euphorion.

But for your pleasure
I will refrain.

Winding among the CHORUS and drawing them forth to dance.

Round this gay company 9745
Hover I light;
Now is the melody,
Now is the movement right?

Helena.

Yes, that is neatly done!
Lead all the beauties on,
Artfully dance! 9750

Faust.

Oh, that an end might be!
Ne'er can this roguery
My joy enhance.

*EUPHORION and the CHORUS, dancing and singing, move about in
interlocking dance.*

Chorus.

When thy twin arms so fair
Charming thou raisest, 9755

THE SECOND PART, III

237

Radiant thy curly hair
Shaking displacest,
When thou with foot so light
Skimmest the earth in flight, 9760
Hither and off again,
Dancing a linked chain,
Thou hast thy goal attained,
Thou lovely child;
All of our hearts beguiled, 9765
All hast thou gained.

Pause.
Euphorion.

O all ye lithesome
Roes never staying,
Quickly and blithesome,
On, to new playing! 9770
I am the hunter,
Ye are the game.

Chorus.

Wilt thou us capture,
Be not unruly
For we, in rapture, 9775
Only would truly
Closely embrace thee,
Thy beauty claim!

Euphorion.

Through groves and rubble,
Over stock and stubble! 9780
Lightly attainable,
That I detest;
Hardly obtainable
Pleases me best.

Helena and Faust.

Oh what madness! Oh what daring! 9785
There's no hope of moderation.
Hark! It sounds like trumpets' blaring
Over vale and woods resounding;
What a tumult! What a brawl!

Chorus [entering singly and quickly].

He ran past us, left us lagging, 9790
Scorned and mocked us, onward bounding;
See how hither he is dragging
Now the wildest one of all.

Euphorion [bearing a young maiden].

Here I drag the sturdy maiden
Hither to enforced enjoyment; 9795

For my rapture, for my zest,
 I press her resisting breast,
 Kiss her lips reluctant still,
 Showing thus my strength and will.

Maiden.

Loose me! In this form and cover 9800
 Spirit-strength and courage stay,
 And our will, like thine moreover,
 Is not lightly swept away.
 In a strait dost think me truly?
 For thine arm great strength dost claim! 9805
 Hold me fast, fool, and I'll duly
 Scorch thee well, a merry game.

She turns to flame and flashes up in the air.

To the buoyant breezes follow,
 To the caverns' dreary hollow,
 Come the vanished prize to claim. 9810

Euphorion [shaking off the last flames].

Rocks all around me here,
 Thickets and woods among,
 Why should they bound me here?
 Still am I fresh and young.
 Wild winds are dashing there, 9815
 Billows are crashing there,
 Both far away I hear,
 Would I were near!

He leaps higher and higher up the rocks.

Helena, Faust, and the Chorus.

Like a chamois wouldst aspire?
 Dreadful fall we fear for thee.

Euphorion.

Higher must I climb and higher, 9820
 Ever farther must I see.
 Now I know where I stand,
 Midst of great Pelops' land,
 Midst of an isle are we, 9825
 Kin to the earth and sea!

Chorus.

Wilt not mid wood and hill
 Linger contented?
 Soon we shall seek at will
 Grapes in rows planted, 9830
 Grapes on the hillsides fanned,
 Figs and gold apples rare.

Ah, stay in this fair land,
Stay thou so fair!

Euphorion.

Dream ye of days of peace?
Dream on whom dreams may please!
"War!" is the signal cry,
Echoed by "Victory!"

9835

Chorus.

Who in peace ever
Wishes war back again,
Himself doth sever
From hope's rich gain.

9840

Euphorion.

They whom this land hath led
Out of dread into dread,
Free, of undaunted mood,
Not sparing of their blood:
To their unbreakable,
Consecrate chain,
Fighters unshakeable,
May it bring gain!

9845

Chorus.

Look aloft! How high he's mounting!
Yet to us not small he seems,
As if armed, on triumph counting,
As of bronze and steel he gleams.

9850

Euphorion.

Not on walls or moats enduring,
On his own strength each must rest;
Fortress firm and all-securing
Is a man's own iron breast.
Would ye live unconquered freemen,
Arm, and off to combat wild!
Amazons will be your women,
And a hero every child.

9855

9860

Chorus.

Hallowèd Poesy,
Soar aloft heavenly,
Shine on, thou fairest star,
Farther and still more far,
Yet dost thou reach us still,
Yet do we hear and thrill,
Joyous we are.

9865

Euphorion.

No, not a child am I appearing,
A youth in armour I come on,
Who, joined with strong men, free and daring,
Great deeds in spirit now has done.

9870

Away!
 No stay, 9875
 On to the path where fame is won.

Helena and Faust.

Scarcely thou to life art given,
 Scarcely knowing day's glad beam,
 Yearning dizzily art driven
 To the field where sorrows teem. 9880
 Are then we
 Naught to thee?
 Is the lovely bond a dream?

Euphorion.

Hear ye the thundering on the ocean?
 How thunder back the vale and wood? 9885
 In dust and foam, in fierce commotion,
 Host charges host in weltering blood,
 And for all
 "Death!" 's the call,
 That of course is understood. 9890

Helena, Faust, and the Chorus.

How we shudder! How we quiver!
 Does death summon thee to fall?

Euphorion.

From afar look on? No, never!
 Worry, need—I'll share it all.

The Above.

Danger his rashness brings, 9895
 Fatally bold!

Euphorion.

Still must I!—See the wings
 That now unfold!
 Thither! I must! I must!
 Grudge not the flight! 9900

He casts himself into the air, his garments bear him up for a moment, his head is irradiated, a trail of light follows him.

Chorus.

Icarus! Icarus!
 Piteous plight!

A beautiful youth falls at his parents' feet. We think we recognize a familiar form¹ in the dead body; but the corporeal vanishes at once, the aureole rises like a comet toward heaven. The robe, mantle, and lyre remain lying on the ground.

Helena and Faust.

Quick on joy followeth
 Dire pain and moan.

¹That of Byron, whom Goethe identified with Euphorion "as a representative of the most recent era in poetry."

Euphorion's Voice [from the depths].

Leave me in realms of death,
Mother, not all alone!

9905

Pause.

Chorus [a Dirge].

Not alone!—where'er thou bidest,
For we think that well we know thee;
Ah! and if from life thou hidest,
Never will a heart forgo thee.
For thee scarcely know we sadness,
Enviously we sing thy fate,
For thou hadst in pain and gladness
Songs and courage high and great.

9910

Born with earthly bliss thy dower,
Great thy strength, proud thy descent,
Soon lost to thyself, the flower
Of thy youth was from thee rent.
Keen thy sight, the world discerning,
Feeling for each heart-throb known,
For fair women's passion yearning,
And a song thy very own.

9915

9920

But thy tamelessness engaged thee
In a net without a flaw,
And in headlong strife enraged thee
Against custom, against law;
But at last an aim transcendent
Gave thy noble courage weight,
Thou wouldst win a fame resplendent—
But success was not thy fate.

9925

9930

Who succeeds?—A dismal query,
Shunned by Fate who gives no heed,
When, on days ill-starred and dreary,
Silently the people bleed.
But new songs afresh create them,
Deeply bowed lament no more:
Earth again will generate them
As it ever did of yore.

9935

Complete pause. The music ceases.

Helena [to FAUST]. Alas, an ancient truth is verified in me:

That bliss and beauty never lastingly unite.

9940

The bond of life is rent no less than that of love;

Bewailing both, I say with sorrow: Fare thee well!

And cast myself once more, once only, in thine arms.

Receive, Persephone, receive the boy and me.

She embraces FAUST, she herself vanishes, robe and veil remain in his arms.

Phorkyas [to FAUST]. Hold fast what now alone is left to thee! 9945

Let not the garment go. Already demons
Are twitching at its skirts and they would like
To snatch it to the lower world. Hold fast!
It is no more the goddess whom thou lost,
But godlike is it. Make use of the high 9950
And priceless boon, and rising soar aloft.
Swift over all things common will it bear thee
Away through ether while thou canst endure.
We'll meet again, far, far away from here.

HELENA's garments dissolve into clouds, surround FAUST, lift him in the air, and move away with him.

Phorkyas [picks up EUPHORION's robe, mantle, and lyre from the ground, steps forward to the proscenium, lifts up the mementoes, and speaks].

A lucky find, although belated! 9955
The flame, in truth, is dissipated,
Yet for the world I've no distress.
Here is enough to start the poet
And swell his tribe with jealousy;
And talent? Though I can't bestow it, 9960
I can at least bestow the dress.

She sits down in the proscenium at the foot of a column.

Panthalis. Now hasten, maidens! From the sorcery we're free,
From the mad tyranny of the Thessalian hag,
Freed from the wildering, jangling tones that dazed us all,
The ear confounding and still worse the inner sense. 9965
Hence, down to Hades! where our Queen has hastened on,
With solemn steps descending. Let her footsteps be
Directly followed by the steps of faithful maids.
Her shall we find beside the throne of the Inscrutable.¹

Chorus.

Everywhere indeed do queens ever like to be, 9970
And in Hades too do they stand supreme;
Proudly with their peers are they allied,
With Persephone most intimate.
We, however, in the background
Of deep, asphodelian meadows, 9975
With far-reaching poplars
And unfruitful willows joined,
What diversion shall we have there?
Bat-like to squeak and twitter
In whispers undelighting, spectral. 9980

¹Persephone.

Panthalis. Who hath not won a name nor wills a noble deed,
 Belongs but to the elements, so fare thy way!
 Hotly I wish to join my Queen. Not merit alone,
 Faithfulness too preserves our personality.

Exit.

All

Back to the light of day are we now restored, 9985
 Truly persons no more.
 We feel it, we know it too,
 But to Hades we go back never;
 For ever-living Nature lays
 Claim to us spirits, 9990
 We to her lay claim that is valid.

A Part of the CHORUS.

In these thousand branches' quivering whisper, in their murmuring
 swaying,
 Toying gently, we'll entice up from the roots the vital currents
 To the twigs; and now with leafage, now with blooms in great
 profusion
 We'll adorn the fluttering tresses freely for an airy growth. 9995
 Falls the fruit, at once will gather life-enjoying herds and people,
 Quickly coming, briskly crowding, for the picking, for the tasting;
 They will all bow down around us as before primeval gods.

Another Part.

In the smooth, far-gleaming mirror by these rocky walls we'll nestle,
 Moving in the gentle wavelets to and fro, caressingly. 10000
 To each sound we'll hearken, list to songs of birds and reedy fluting.
 Be it Pan's own fearful voice, a ready answer is at hand.
 Doth it murmur, we too murmur; thunders it, we roll our thunders
 Overwhelming, doubly crashing, threefold, tenfold echoing back.

A Third Part.

Sisters, we more nimble, we will hasten with the brooklets onward, 10005
 For those yonder distant, richly-mantled mountain ranges charm
 us.
 Ever downward, ever deeper, while meandering we'll water
 Now the meadow, now the pasture, then the garden round the
 house,
 It is marked by slender cypress tree-tops soaring into ether
 Over landscape, winding shore-line, and the mirror of the stream. 10010

A Fourth Part.

Roam ye others where it please you; we'll engirdle, we will ripple,
 Round the thickly planted hillside where the trellised vines grow
 green;
 There the grower of the vine in anguish ponders hour- and day-long
 How uncertain is the promise of devoted industry.
 Now with hoe and now with shovel, now with hilling, pruning,
 tying, 10015

Unto all the gods he prayeth, to the sun-god best of all.
 Pampered Bacchus frets himself but little for his faithful servant,
 Rests in bowers, lolls in caverns, prattling with the youngest faun.
 What he ever needed for his half-intoxicated dreaming,
 He has always near at hand in wineskins, pitchers, divers vessels, 10020
 Right and left in cool recesses for eternal ages stored.
 But if all the gods together, Helios the most important,
 Fanning, moistening, warming, glowing, filled with grape-vine's
 horn of plenty,

Where the quiet vintner laboured, there new life will soon be
 stirring,

With a rustling in each trellis and a rush from stock to stock. 10025
 Baskets creak and buckets clatter, tubs groan on the bearer's back;
 To the great vat all are going, to the treaders' vigorous dance;
 And thus is the sacred plenty of the pure-born, juicy berries
 Rudely trodden, foaming, spurting, crushed to an unsightly mass.
 Now the ear is pierced by brazen clash of cymbals and of timbrels, 10030
 For the veil of mystery hath Dionysus cast aside;
 He comes forth with goat-foot satyrs, whirling goat-foot satyresses;
 And amid them brays, untamed and shrill, Silenus' long-eared
 beast.

Naught is spared! For cloven hoofs are trampling down all decent
 custom;

For the senses whirling stagger, horribly the ear is stunned. 10035
 For the cup the drunken fumble, over-full are heads and bellies.
 Careful still is this and that one, but he heightens thus the tumult,
 For to garner this year's juices, they drain swiftly the old skin.

*The curtain falls, PHORKYAS in the proscenium rises to a gigantic
 height, descends from the cothurni, casts aside mask and veil,
 and appears as MEPHISTOPHELES in order, as far as may be nec-
 essary, to comment on the piece by way of epilogue.¹*

¹This epilogue was never written.

ACT IV

A HIGH MOUNTAIN RANGE

Bold jagged rocky peaks. A cloud approaches, pauses as it touches a peak, and sinks down on a projecting ledge. It divides.

Faust [steps forth]. Looking to deepest solitudes beneath my feet
 I walk in thoughtfulness along this summit's verge, 10040
 Relinquishing my chariot of clouds that bore
 Me gently over land and sea through smiling days.
 Slowly, not scattering, it drifts away from me.
 Off to the east the mass strains, rolling on and on;
 'The eye strains after it, admiring and amazed. 10045
 It breaks while moving, billow-like and changefully,
 Yet seems re-shaping.—Yes, my eyes deceive me not!
 On sun-illuminated pillows gloriously reclines—
 Of giant size, in truth—a godlike woman's form.
 I see it! Like to Juno, Leda, Helena, 10050
 It floats in lovely majesty before my sight.
 Alas! It's shifting! Formless, broad, and towering,
 It resteth in the east like distant ice-clad peaks,
 And, dazzling, mirrors swift days' great significance.
 Yet round me floats a light and tender misty wreath, 10055
 Around my breast and brow, cheering, caressing, cool.
 Now it mounts high and higher, lightly, lingering.
 It draws together.—Doth a rapturing form deceive
 Mine eyes, youth's first, long-unenjoyed and highest bliss?
 The earliest, deepest treasures of my heart break forth; 10060
 The dawn of love, so light of wing, it typifies,
 The swiftly-felt, the first scarce comprehended glance,
 Outshining every other treasure, if held fast.
 Like beauty of the soul the lovely form becomes
 More fair, dissolving not, but through the ether soars 10065
 And draws the best of all my being on and on.

A seven-league boot comes thumping forward. Another soon follows. MEPHISTOPHELES steps out of them. The boots stride on hastily.

Mephistopheles. That I call striding briskly ended!
 But say, what kind of whim is this?
 Why midst such horrors here descended,
 By ghastly yawning precipice? 10070
 I know them well but not in this high station,
 For such things really were Hell's own foundation.
Faust. Of foolish tales you've always had a store
 And now begin to deal them out once more.

Mephistopheles [seriously].

When God the Lord—I know well the occasion— 10075

Banned us from air into the deeps profound,

Where, glowing from earth's centre all around,

Eternal fire waxed hottest past all bound,

We found us midst too great illumination

In a most crowded, irksome situation. 10080

The devils, every one, began a coughing,

Above, below, at every vent-hole puffing;

Hell was with sulphur-fumes so much inflated

And such a gas therefrom was generated,

That very soon the earth's flat crust—no wonder!— 10085

Thick as it was, was forced to burst asunder.

So now we have a different situation;

What's now a peak was once a deep foundation.

On this men base the doctrines that they boast,

Turning the lowest into uppermost. 10090

Thus from that slavish hot cave did we fare

To an excessive lording in free air,¹

An open secret but one well concealed

And to the common crowd but late revealed. (*Ephes. 6. 12*)²

Faust. To me a mountain-mass stays nobly dumb, 10095

I ask not wherefore nor from whence it come.

When Nature in herself her own self founded,

The globe of earth she formed and neatly rounded,

In summits and in gorges took delight,

Ranged rock on rock and mountain height on height; 10100

The hills in easy slopes she downward moulded,

Till gently into valleys they unfolded.

There all is verdant growth and for her gladness

She has no need of such convulsive madness.

Mephistopheles. That's what you say! To you it seems quite clear 10105

But he knows better who beheld it near.

. I was at hand when still below was surging

The deep abyss, when streamed a fiery tide,

When Moloch's hammer rock on rock was forging

And scattering mountain-ruins far and wide.³ 10110

Earth still abounds in ponderous strange masses.

Such power in hurling who can well explain?

As wise men know, their reason it surpasses.

The rock lies evermore where it has lain.

We've racked our brains, to our disgrace, in vain. 10115

Only the faithful common people know

And let none shake them in their story:

(Their wisdom ripened long ago)

¹See Ephesians, 2. 2.

²This reference was inserted, not by Goethe, but by his secretary, Riemer.

³Cf. Leviticus, 18. 21; *Paradise Lost*, i. 992ff.

It is a miracle, and Satan gets the glory.

My pilgrim on his crutch of faith limps on
To Devil's Bridge, to Devil's Stone.

10120

Faust. There is indeed remarkable attraction
In seeing a devil's view of Nature's action.

Mephistopheles. Be Nature what she will! What do I care?
Honour's at stake! Satan himself was there!

10125

We are real people, great things we attain.

Violence, tumult, nonsense! See, the sign is plain!—

But—to say something now that's wholly clear—

Has nothing pleased you in our upper sphere?

You have surveyed a boundless territory,

10130

The kingdoms of the world and all their glory; (*Matt. 4*)¹

Still—with that discontented air—

Did you not lust for something anywhere?

Faust. I did! A great work lured me on.

Divine it!

Mephistopheles. That can soon be done.

10135

I'd seek some city, at its heart

A horrid city victuals-mart,

Tortuous alleys, pointed gables,

Beets, kale, and onions on the tables;

Meat-stalls where blue flies take life easy,

10140

Feasting on roasts well-done and greasy;

There you will always surely find

Stench and activity combined.

Then ample squares, broad streets between,

Where one can stalk with lordly mien,

10145

And lastly, where no town-gates bar,

The suburbs boundless, stretching far.

There I'd enjoy the coaches' rolling,

The noisy hither and thither bowling,

Eternal running hither and thither

10150

Of scattered ants that swarm together.

And whether driving, whether riding,

The centre of them all abiding,

Honoured by thousands would be I.

Faust. With that I cannot be contented!

10155

One likes to see the people multiply

And in their way live comfortably,

Even develop, learn thereby—

And yet, in fine, rebels are thus augmented.

Mephistopheles. Then, swelling with self-conscious pride I'd raise 10160

A pleasure-castle in a pleasant place.

Hill, level, meadow, field, and forest glade

Into a splendid garden I'd have made,

Before green walls of verdure, velvet meadows,

¹See note to line 10094.

And measured paths and art-directed shadows, 10165

Cascading falls among the rocks designed,

And fountain-sprays of every kind,

One rising proud and stately in the middle,

While at the sides a thousand spraylets spurt and piddle.

And then I'd build, for loveliest women meet, 10170

Sung villas, each an intimate retreat.

I'd pass there endless time in joyous mood,

Blessed by the dearest social solitude.

"Women," I say, for here, as everywhere,

I think in plurals of the ladies fair. 10175

Faust. Sardanapalus!¹ Vile and new, I swear!

Mephistopheles. Who could divine toward what you would
aspire?

It must have been sublimely bold, in truth,

Toward the moon you'd soar and ever nigher;

Did you mad quest allure you *there* forsooth? 10180

Faust. By no means! For this earthly sphere

Affords a place for great deeds ever.

Astounding things shall happen here,

I feel the strength for bold endeavour.

Mephistopheles. So you'd earn glory? One can see 10185

You've been in heroines' company.

Faust. Lordship, possession, are my aim and thought!

The deed is everything, the glory naught.

Mephistopheles. Yet poets will come forward all the same

To blazon to the later world your fame,

Through folly more fools to inflame. 10190

Faust. Of all this naught is known to you.

How should you know what men will woo?

Your bitter, sharp, and hostile mood,

How does it know what men count good?

10195

Mephistopheles. So be it with you then as best it pleases!

Confide to me the range of your caprices.

Faust. Mine eye was drawn out toward the open ocean

That swelled aloft, self-towering and vaulting,

And then drew back its billows in commotion,

10200

The broad expanse of level shore assailing.

And that irked me, as always insolence

Irks the free soul who prizes every right,

Whose blood, stirred up to passionate vehemence,

Is fired with feelings of a harsh despot.

10205

I thought it chance and gazed more sharply at the main.

The billows paused and then rolled back again,

Withdrawing from the goal so proudly won.

The hour returns, again the game's begun.

¹A type of luxury-loving despot, revived in people's memories by Byron's tragedy, *Sardanapalus*.

Mephistopheles [to the spectators].

There's nothing new in that for me to know;
I knew it a hundred thousand years ago.

10210

Faust [continuing passionately].

It steals along, in countless channels flowing,
Fruitless itself and fruitlessness bestowing;
It swells and grows and rolls and spreads its reign
Over the loathsome, desolate domain.

10215

Strong with a mighty will there wave on wave rolls on,
Reigns for a while, retires, and naught is done.

Even to despair it could harass me, truly,
The aimless force of elements unruly!

Here dares my soul above itself to soar;

10220

Here would I fight, of this be conqueror.

And it is possible! For though the tide
May rise, it fawns along each hillock's side.

It may bestir itself and bluster oh! so loudly,
A little height will meet and daunt it proudly,

10225

A little depth will draw it on amain.

So plan on plan flashed swiftly through my brain:

"Win for thyself great joy, a costly store:

Push back the lordly ocean from the shore;

Limit the bounds of that vast, watery deep

10230

And force it, far away, within itself to keep."

Thus step by step I knew I could explain it.

This is my wish, now dare to help me gain it!

Drums and martial music at the rear of the spectators, at a distance, on the right hand.

Mephistopheles. How easy! Do you hear the drums afar?

Faust. What, war again? The wise man likes not war.

10235

Mephistopheles. Be it war or peace! From every circumstance

The wise man tries to draw himself some profit.

One watches, notes each favouring chance.

Now is the moment, Faustus, make use of it!

Faust. Spare me such riddle-mongering, my friend!

10240

Be brief, explain, what is it you intend?

Mephistopheles. As I came here, it was not hid from me,

Our Emperor suffers great anxiety;

You know him well. The while that we amused him

And with illusive show of wealth abused him,

10245

He thought the whole world could be had for pay.

For when a youth, the throne fell to his sway

And wrongly he concluded at his leisure

Two things one could quite well combine—

Which would be most desirable and fine—

10250

To rule and also take one's pleasure.

Faust. A great mistake. Whoever would command,

Must in commanding feel his greatest blessing.

- A lofty purpose must his breast expand,
 But what he wills must be beyond all guessing. 10255
 What he to his most faithful whispereth:
 It's done! Amazed, all subjects hold their breath.
 Thus always will he have the most exalted place,
 The worthiest, he! Enjoyment doth debase.
- Mephistopheles.* Not such is he! Enjoy? how didn't he? 10260
 Meanwhile the realm was rent by anarchy,
 Where great and small warred criss-cross with each other
 And brother drove from home or slaughtered brother,
 Castle with castle, town with town in feud,
 Guild against noble, all in fiercest mood. 10265
 Chapters and flocks against their bishops rose.
 If men but saw each other, they were foes.
 In churches murder, homicide; outside each gate
 Each merchant, traveller, waits the self-same fate.
 Boldness in all grew to no mean extent. 10270
 To live meant self-defence!—Well, now, that went.
- Faust.* It went, it staggered, fell, and up it jumped,
 Fell over itself, and in a heap it plumped.
- Mephistopheles.* And such conditions no one dared to blame;
 Some standing each could, each would, claim. 10275
 As peer of any has the least man passed,
 But for the best, things grew too mad at last.
 The capable arose then in their might
 And said: "Who gives us peace is lord by right;
 The Emperor cannot, will not—let us choose 10280
 A new one, one who will infuse
 New life into the realm he safeguards duly,
 Where peace and justice govern truly
 The world he strengthens and renews."
- Faust.* That sound like priestcraft.
- Mephistopheles.* Priests they were, be sure. 10285
 Their own well-nourished paunch they made secure.
 More than all others were they implicated.
 The riot grew, riot was consecrated.
 Our Emperor, to whom we gave delight,
 Is drawing near, perhaps for his last fight. 10290
- Faust.* I pity him, so kind and frank was he.
- Mephistopheles.* While there is life, there's hope. Come, let
 us see.
 Let's liberate him from this narrow vale!
 A single rescue doth a thousand times avail.
 Who knows how yet the dice may fall? 10295
 Grant him good luck, vassals he'll have withal.
- They climb over the middle range of mountains and survey the
 disposition of the host in the valley. Drums and martial music
 resound from below.*

Mephistopheles. They've taken their position well, I see;
We'll join them and complete the victory.

Faust. What is there to expect, I'd like to know?
Fraud! Dazzling magic! Hollow show!

10300

Mephistopheles. Nay, stratagem to win the fight!
Just fix your gaze upon a lofty height
And only think of your high aim.
If we preserve the Emperor's throne and land,
Then you can kneel and justly claim
In feudal right a boundless strand.

10305

Faust. Much have you ere now carried through;
Come then and win a battle too.

Mephistopheles. No, you will win it; For, in brief,
You'll be the General-in-Chief.

10310

Faust. A really lofty post for me, commanding
In places of which I've no understanding!

Mephistopheles. You let the General Staff provide
And the Field Marshal's safe whate'er betide.
Lack of war-counsel I have long since traced,
Hence a war-council I have straightway based
On primal mountains' primal human might;
Blest he who can its elements unite.

10315

Faust. What do I see there bearing arms?
Have you stirred mountain-folk with your alarms?

10320

Mephistopheles. No! I have called, like Peter Quince,
Of all the lot of quintessence.

The THREE MIGHTY MEN appear (II Sam. 23, 8).

Mephistopheles. You see my fellows coming there!
Of different ages are they, surely,
In different garb and outfit they appear;
With them, I know, you'll not fare poorly.

10325

To the spectators.

Now every child delights to see
A knight's bright collar and his armour;
And allegoric though the rascals be,
Each is but all the more a charmer.

10330

Fight-hard [young, lightly armed, in motley dress].

If anyone should look me in the eyes,
Straight at his jaw my fist shall fare,
And if a coward from me flies,
I'll catch him by his streaming hair.

Get-quick [manly, well armed, richly clad].

Such empty brawls are farces dreary,
We lose what such occasion brings;
Only in taking be not weary,
Look afterward to other things.

10335

Hold-fast [along in years, strongly armed, without attire].
Not much is thus accumulated;

Great riches are soon dissipated,
 Adown life's stream they rush as swift as thought.
 To take is good, better to keep when taken;
 Let the old greybeard rule unshaken
 And none shall plunder you of aught.
They descend together.

10340

ON THE HEADLAND

EMPEROR. GENERALISSIMO. BODYGUARDS

*Drums and martial music from below.**The EMPEROR's tent is being pitched.*

Generalissimo. The project still seems well deliberated,
 That back in this convenient vale
 Our army all be drawn and concentrated;
 I trust this disposition will avail.

10345

Emperor. How things will go now we must soon be seeing;
 But I dislike this giving way, this semi-fleeing.

10350

Generalissimo. Look here, my prince, at our right flank's
 position.

In war such ground's a longed-for acquisition:
 Not steep the hills, yet not for easy faring,
 To us propitious, to the foe ensnaring.
 Half hidden on the billowy field are we;
 They will not venture here with cavalry.

10355

Emperor. I can but praise, and hope the best;
 Now arm and heart can meet the test.

Generalissimo. There where the level ground stretches away,
 You see the phalanx eager for the fray.

10360

Through morning's fragrant mist in sunshine rare
 The lances glint and sparkle in the air.

How dark the mighty square is surging to and fro!
 For great achievements all the thousands glow.

The mass's power you thus can comprehend;
 The enemy's power I trust them now to rend.

10365

Emperor. For the first time I have so fair a view.
 An army such as this can count as two.

Generalissimo. Of our left flank I've nothing to report.
 Stout heroes guard that beetling rocky fârt.

10370

The stony cliffs, lit by the weapons' sheen,
 Protect the vital pass to the ravine.

Here I foresee, what little they expect.

Our foes will in the bloody brawl be wrecked.

Emperor. Yonder they come, false kinsmen, one and other,
 Even as they styled me Uncle, Cousin, Brother,

10375

Who've more and more presumed, all ties have sundered,
 The sceptre of its might, the throne's respect have plundered,

Then, in their feuds, the realm have devastated

And now rebel against me, federated.

10380

The rabble wavers in uncertain spirit,

Then streams along wherever the stream may bear it.

Generalissimo. A trusty scout, for tidings sent in quest,

Hastes down the rocks. May he have been well blessed!

First Scout.

Fortune fair on us has waited.

10385

Through our bold and crafty skill

Here and there we penetrated;

But the news we bring is ill.

Many are pure homage swearing,

They and many a soldier true;

10390

But they plead, for not appearing,

Inner ferment, danger too.

Emperor. Through selfishness one learns self-preservation,

Not honour, thanks, affection, obligation.

Do you not think, when your accounts fall due,

10395

Your neighbour's burning house will burn up you?

Generalissimo. The second comes, but slowly down he clammers;

The weary man trembles in all his members.

Second Scout.

Wild confusion we detected

First of all, were highly cheered;

10400

Then at once and unexpected,

A new emperor appeared.

And in fore-determined manner

Through the plain the rabble sweep;

His perfidious unfurled banner

10405

They all follow—they are sheep.

Emperor. A rival emperor I esteem a gain,

Now know myself an emperor not in vain.

As soldier only did I armour don,

Now for a higher aim is it put on.

10410

At every feast, though brilliant it might be

And naught seemed lacking, danger lacked to *me*.

When ring-sports you advised—whatever your intent—

My heart beat high, I breathed the tournament.

And had you not from war dissuaded me,

10415

Renowned for bright heroic deeds I'd be.

What self-reliance did I feel, what fortitude!

When mirrored in that realm of fire I stood!

The element leapt toward me, infuriate,

'Twas only semblance, yet a semblance great.

10420

I dreamed confusedly of victory and fame,

Now I'll retrieve my fault and expiate my shame.

The heralds are despatched to challenge the rival emperor to single combat.

FAUST in armour, with half-closed visor. The THREE MIGHTY MEN armed and clothed as above.

Faust. We come and hope that we are welcome here;

Foresight avails even when no need is near.

You know the mountain-people think and pore,

10425

Well-studied in all rocks' and nature's lore.

The spirits, long since vanished from the plain,

Of rocky heights are more than ever fain.

Silent they work through devious crevasses

In rich metallic fumes of noble gases.

10430

On sundering, testing, blending, they are bent,

Their only impulse, something to invent.

With the light touch of spiritual power

They build transparent figures, hour by hour;

The crystal then in its eternal silence glasses

10435

What in the upper world above them passes.

Emperor. I've heard it and believe that it may be;

Yet, gallant man, say: what is that to me?

Faust. The Norcian necromant, of Sabine race.

Your faithful, worthy servant, sends me in his place.

10440

What fate once threatened him, so monstrous, dire!

The fagots crackled, leapt the tongues of fire:

Dry billets, lattice-like, were round about him fixed,

With pitch and bars of sulphur intermixed.

Rescue through devil, man, or god was vain.

10445

Your Majesty it was who burst the fiery chain!

It was in Rome. Still of most grateful mood,

He pays heed to your path with deep solicitude.

He has forgotten self from that dread moment on;

He questions stars and depths for you alone.

10450

He charged us, as our task the most immediate,

To stand by you. The mountain's powers are great;

Here Nature works omnipotently free.

The priests' dull wits chide it as sorcery.

Emperor. On festal days when guest on guest we're greeting,

10455

Who come for joy and hope for joyous meeting,

We like to see them shoving, pushing, one and all,

So many men as make the rooms seem small.

But still most highly welcome must the good man be

If to our aid he comes with energy

10460

Some morning hour when many dangers wait,

And doubtful hang the balances of Fate.

But here at this hour's critical demand

Take not the willing sword in your strong hand;

Honour the hour when many thousands stride

10465

To fight against me or upon my side.

Self is the man! Who asks a throne and crown
Must in himself be worthy such renown.

The spectre who against us has arisen,
Himself as Emperor, Lord of our lands, doth christen, 10470
Our army's Duke, our nobles' feudal Lord, he must
With mine own hand into the realm of death be thrust!

Faust. Though it be done to end the noble undertaking,
You do not well, your head thus to be staking.
Is not your helm with plume and crest bedecked? 10475
The head which fires our zeal it doth protect.

Without the head what could the limbs avail?
For if it's drowsy, all droop down and fail;
If it is hurt, at once all have a wound,
Arise afresh, if quickly it grows sound. 10480

To give its laws effect, swift is the arm,
It lifts the shield to guard the skull from harm.
Instantly doth the sword its duty know,
Parries with vigour and returns the blow.
The active foot shares in the other's weal 10485
As on the slain man's neck it plants its heel.

Emperor. Such is my wrath, him thus I fain would treat,
Make his proud head a footstool for my feet.

Heralds [*come back*].

Little honour, little glory
Met us yonder at our coming; 10490
At our noble, valiant story
Laughed they as a vapid mumming:
"Vanished is your Emperor yonder,
But an echo through the vale;
If on him we are to ponder, 10495
'There was once'—so runs the tale."

Faust. As your best men have wished, it doth betide;
Both staunch and true they're standing at your side.
There comes the foe, your troops impatient wait.
Order attack, the hour is fortunate. 10500

Emperor. Here I surrender the supreme command.

To the GENERALISSIMO.

So be your duty, Prince, in your own hand.

Generalissimo. Then let our right wing march on to the field!
The enemy's left wing, that just now is ascending,
Ere they complete their final step, shall yield 10505
Before the tested constancy of our defending.

Faust. I beg you then to let this hero gay
Be added to your ranks without delay,
Be fully in your ranks incorporated;
His sturdy strength will much avail, so mated. 10510

He points to the right.

Fight-hard [steps forward]. Who shows his face to me turns not away

Till both his cheek- and jawbones get a mangling,
Who turns his back, limp on his nape straightway
Are neck and head and scalp right grimly dangling.

And if your men then strike and lunge

10515

With sword and mace as I go raging round,

Man after man, the foe will plunge

And in their own hot blood be drowned.

Exit.

Generalissimo. Let now our centre phalanx follow slow,

With caution but in full force meet the foe.

10520

See, on the right, now fiercely overtaken,

Their schemes our force has desperately shaken,

Faust [pointing to the man in the middle].

Then let this hero too your hest obey.

He's quick and in a rush sweeps all away.

Get-quick [steps forth]. The imperial host's heroic spirit

10525

Will rise with hope for booty near it;

The goal, set up for all, shall be

The rival emperor's rich marquee.

Upon his seat he will not swagger long,

I'll take my place and lead the phalanx strong.

10530

Speed-booty [sutler-woman, fawning on him].

Although his wife I may not be,

My dearest lover still is he.

For us a harvest rare is ripe.

Women are fierce to grab and gripe,

In robbing ruthless and uncowed.

10535

Forward in conquest!—All is allowed.

Exeunt both.

Generalissimo. Against our left, as was to be expected,

Their right flank has been vigorously directed.

The narrow, rocky pass they seek to gain;

To thwart the furious onset ours will strain.

10540

Faust [beckons to the left]. I beg you, Sire, also to note this one:

When strength adds to its strength, no harm is done.

Hold-fast [steps forward]. For your left wing dismiss all care!

For where I am, safe is possession there;

Thus age asserts itself, we're told;

10545

No lightning shatters what I hold.

Exit.

Mephistopheles [coming down from above].

Look at the background, see how surges

Out of the jagged, rocky gorges

A host of armed men—how they pour,

Crowding the narrow pathways ever more—

10550

With helmet, armour, sword, and spear

To build a rampart at our rear,
Waiting the signal to strike home.

Aside to the knowing ones.

You must not ask from whence they come.
Industriously I've quite cleared out
The halls of armour roundabout.

10555

There were they all, on foot or mounted,
As if lords of the earth they still were counted;
Knight, emperor, king, they were of yore,
Now empty snail-shells, nothing more;
Full many a ghost is thus adorned for strife,
Bringing the Middle Ages back to life.
Whatever devilkin is thus bedecked,
They'll now create a rare effect.

10560

Aloud.

Hark how in anger now they chatter,
With clank of tin each other batter!
And torn old flags on standards flutter free,
That waited stirring breezes restlessly.
Reflect, an ancient folk stands ready there
And in this modern conflict fain would share.

10565

Fearful resounding of trumpets from above, a perceptible wavering in the enemy's army.

10570

Faust. Already the horizon darkles,
Yet meaningful anon there sparkles
A crimson-red, portentous light;
And now the weapons glitter bloody,
The air, the woods, and cliffs are ruddy;
The whole sky mingles in the fight.

10575

Mephistopheles. The right flank stoutly holds its station;
But towering midst them, self-reliant,
I see Jack Fight-hard, nimble giant,
Busy and swift in his own fashion.

10580

Emperor. At first I saw one arm engaging,
But now I see a dozen raging;
No law of Nature's working here.

Faust. Have you not heard of mists that over
Sicilian sea-coasts sweep and hover?
There, in the daylight, swaying, clear,
Uplifted into mid-air spaces
And mirrored in especial hazes,
One sees a vision strange appear:
There cities hover backward, onward,
There gardens waver up- and downward,
As form on form breaks through the air.

10585

10590

Emperor. Yet how suspicious! For I see the tall
Spear-heads flash lightning, one and all;
Behold our phalanx' shining lances!

10595

On each a nimble flamelet dances.

Too spectral seems to me this sight.

Faust. Oh, pardon, Sire, those are the traces

Of spiritual natures, vanished races,

Pollux' and Castor's reflex, the great pair

10600

By whom all sailors used to swear;

They gather here their final might.

Emperor. But say: to whom are we indebted

That Nature hath us so abetted

As here her rarest powers to unite?

10605

Mephistopheles. To whom except that lofty Master

Who bears your fate within his breast?

Your foe's strong menace of disaster

Has stirred his soul to deep unrest.

You would he thank and save and cherish

10610

Though he himself should thereby perish.

Emperor. They joyed to lead me round, with pomp invested;

I felt my power and wished to test it;

Fitting it seemed—though I was scarce aware—

To give to that white beard the cooling air.

10615

I spoiled a pastime that the clergy savour

And truly thus did not acquire their favour.

Now shall I, when so many years have passed,

Reap the returns of that glad deed at last?

Faust. Rich is the interest of a generous deed.

10620

Look upwards! For he soon will send us,

If I err not, a sign portentous.

It will reveal itself at once, give heed!

Emperor. An eagle soaring high in heaven I see,

A griffin wild pursues him threateningly.

10625

Faust. Give heed: auspicious seems the sign.

The griffin is of fabled line;

Can he forget his foe is regal?

How dare he fight a genuine eagle?

Emperor. And now in circles far extending

10630

They wheel around, and in a flash

They straight upon each other dash,

Each other's throat and bosom rending.

Faust. Mark how the sorry griffin, torn

And ruffled sore, finds naught but injuries

10635

And with his drooping lion's tail, forlorn,

Plunging in tree-tops, vanishes.

Emperor. Even as the sign, be the event!

I accept it all with wonderment.

Mephistopheles [toward the right]. Under crushing blows repeated 10640

Has the foe perforce retreated;

Fighting in uncertain fashion,

They crowd toward their right wing's station,

Leave their left wing undirected,

In confusion, unprotected.

10645

Now our phalanx, firmly tight'ning,

Moves to right and like the lightning

At the foe's weak spot it flashes.—

Now, like waves the tempest dashes

Spuming, equal powers are raging,

10650

Twofold conflict wildly waging;

Never was aught planned more glorious,

In this battle we're victorious!

Emperor [*on the left to FAUST*]. Look! In jeopardy is our position,

If I'm right in my suspicion.

10655

Not a stone do I see flying,

Mounted are the rocks low-lying,

But the upper stand deserted.

Now!—To one huge mass converted,

Press the enemy on and on,

10660

Now perhaps the pass have won.

Toil unholy thus ends fruitless!

And your arts have all proved bootless.

Pause.

Mephistopheles. Here come my pair of ravens winging,

What may the message be they're bringing?

10665

I fear we're in an evil plight.

Emperor. What are these doleful birds portending?

Hither their sable sails they're bending

From the hot combat on the height.

Mephistopheles [*to the ravens*]. Perch near my ears. Lost is he never 10670

To whom you grant your guardian favour,

For your advice is sound and right.

Faust [*to the EMPEROR*]. You've surely heard of pigeons flying

Back to their food and nestlings, hieing

From farthest lands to their own coast.

10675

We find a difference here obtaining:

Pigeon-post serves while peace is reigning,

But war demands the raven-post.

Mephistopheles. A fate's reported that distresses.

See yonder how the enemy presses

10680

Around our heroes' rocky wall.

The nearest heights have been surmounted

And if the pass be theirs accounted,

We'll find it hard to stand at all.

Emperor. So then deception was played on me!

10685

Into these meshes you have drawn me;

I shudder in this tangling net.

Mephistopheles. Courage! All has not failed as yet.

Have patience, craft, for the last knot.

The usual end is fierce and hot.

10690

My trusty messengers I have at hand;
Command that I may give command.

Generalissimo [*who has arrived meanwhile*].

These men with whom you are confederated
Have all the time made me feel irritated.

No stable luck doth magic earn.

10695

As for this conflict, I can't mend it;

'Twas they began it, let them end it.

My staff of office I return.

Emperor. Keep it until a better hour

Which luck perchance has in its grip.

10700

Before this ugly chap I cower,

Him and his raven-fellowship.

To MEPHISTOPHELES.

I cannot grant the staff to you;

You do not seem the proper man.

Command! and seek to make us free anew,

10705

Then happen all that happen can.

Exit into the tent with the GENERALISSIMO.

Mephistopheles. The blunted staff—may he have safety of it!

Us others it could little profit,

There was a kind of cross thereon.

Faust. What's to be done?

Mephistopheles. It is already done!—

10710

Now haste, black kin, in service fleeting

To the great mountain-lake! The undines greeting,

Beg them their torrents' semblance to prepare.

Through women's arts, beyond our seeing,

They can part semblance from real being,

10715

And that it is real being, each will swear.

Pause.

Faust. Those water-maidens, look! them must our ravens

Have quite enveigled from their havens,

For yonder is a trickling you can see.

From many a barren, dry place in the mountain

10720

Arises now a full, swift-flowing fountain.

It's over with our enemy's victory.

Mephistopheles. To such strange greeting they're not used.

The boldest climbers are confused.

Faust. With might now brook to brook 'is downward rushing;

10725

From many a gorge redoubled they come gushing.

One cascades in an arch adown the trail,

Soon spreading outward on a rocky level,

Foaming and rushing to and fro in revel,

Leaping down step by step into the vale.

10730

What boots heroic, brave resistance?

The mighty flood sweeps them past all assistance.

Before so fierce a surge I too must quail.

Mephistopheles. Naught do I see of water and illusion;

Men's eyes alone are subject to confusion.

10735

In this odd case I take a great delight.

The crowds rush on, are fain to leap and bound.

The fools! they think that they'll be drowned,

And, as if swimming, drolly thrash around,

Panting and snorting on the solid ground.

10740

Confusion now is at its height.

The ravens have returned.

I'll praise you to the lofty Master¹ duly.

Now if you'll prove that you are masters truly,

Hasten ye to the glowing smithy

Where tireless dwarf-folk on their stithy

10745

Strike sparks from metal and from stone.

Ask, while at length you prate and flatter,

For fires that beam and flash and scatter,

Such as to their deep minds are known.

It's true, sheet lightning in the distance dancing

10750

And fall of stars from height of heaven glancing

May happen any summer night;

Sheet lightning, though, amid entangled bushes

And stars that hiss among the quenching rushes:

Not often seen is such a sight.

10755

Don't worry much, but be, with understanding,

At first entreating, then commanding.

Exeunt the ravens. All takes place as prescribed.

Mephistopheles. Before the foe there falls a thick, dark curtain!

Their step and tread become uncertain!

Everywhere flitting scintillations,

10760

Sudden and blinding illuminations.

That's fine, methinks, and has succeeded.

But now a sound of terror's needed.

Faust. The hollow armour from the vaulted chambers

Revives in open air in all its members;

10765

There it's been rattling, clattering all around,

A wondrous-strange, discordant sound.

Mephistopheles. Quite right! They're now past all restraining.

Hark to the sound of blows those knights are raining

As in the dear old times of yore.

10770

Brassards and cuisses, charging, rearing,

As Guelph and Ghibelline appearing,

Renew the everlasting strife once more.

Their enmity still unabated,

Firm in the hate their fathers hated,

10775

Both far and wide resounds the wild uproar.

Hate between parties is the devil's

Best helper still in all his revels,

¹Lucifer.

Till the last horror ends it all;
 Abhorrent sounds of panic panic,
 From time to time sharp, shrill, satanic,
 Through all the valley rise and fall.

10780

Warlike tumult in the orchestra, finally passing over into lively martial airs.

THE RIVAL EMPEROR'S TENT

THRONE, RICH SURROUNDINGS

GET-QUICK. SPEED-BOOTY.

Speed-booty.

So we're the first ones here, I seel

Get-quick.

No raven flies as fast as we.

Speed-booty.

Oh, what a store lies here heaped up!
 Where shall I start? Where shall I stop?

10785

Get-quick.

How full indeed the whole place stands;
 I don't know where to lay my hands.

Speed-booty.

This rug is just the thing I need;
 My couch is oft too hard indeed.

10790

Get-quick.

Here hangs a club with many a spike;
 I long have wished to have its like.

Speed-booty.

The scarlet mantle, golden-hemmed,
 Of such a one I've often dreamt.

Get-quick [taking the weapon].

With this the job is quickly done;
 One strikes his man dead and goes on.
 You've piled so much now on your back
 But nothing worth while's in your sack.
 That rubbish, leave it where it lay,
 Take one of these small chests away!
 The army's destined pay they hold,
 In this one's belly naught but gold.

10795

10800

Speed-booty.

This thing's a killing weight, I swear it;
 I cannot lift it, cannot bear it.

Get-quick.

Quick! Duck down! Stoop! and I will pack
 The booty on your sturdy back.

10805

Speed-booty.

Oh, woe! Oh, woe! I'm done for! Whew!
That load will break my back in two.

The chest falls and springs open.

Get-quick.

There lies in heaps the ruddy gold;
Quick, rake it up, fall to, lay hold!

10810

Speed-booty [crouches down].

Quick to the work, fill up my lap!
'Twill be enough for any hap.

Get-quick.

And so enough! Make haste and go!

She stands up.

Your apron has a hole! Oh, woe!
Go where you will or stand, I see
You sowing treasures all too free.

10815

Bodyguards of our EMPEROR.

This spot is sacred! What are you up to?
Rifling the Emperor's treasure? Shame on you!

Get-quick.

We risked our limbs for little pay
And fetch our portion of the prey.
In enemies' tents it's custom so,
And we, we're soldiers too, you know.

10820

Bodyguards.

In our profession that won't do.
A carrion-thief and soldier tool
Who nears our Emperor must be
A soldier used to honesty.

10825

Get-quick.

Yes, honesty—we know that same
And "Contribution" is its name.
All of you lie under one same cover:
The password of your trade's "Fork over!"

10830

To SPEED-BOOTY.

Away and drag off what you've got,
Since welcome guests here we are not.

Exeunt.

First Bodyguard.

Say, why did you not straightway slap
His cheek? the dirty, saucy chap!

Second.

I don't know, strength had gone from me,
So spectre-like they seemed to be.

10835

Third.

Things all went bad before my sight;
They flickered, I could not see right.

Fourth.

How to express it I know not;
 The whole day long it was so hot, 10840
 Fearsome, oppressive, close as well.
 While one man stood, another fell.
 We groped and struck both high and low;
 A foeman fell at every blow.
 Before us swayed a kind of mist, 10845
 And something hummed and roared and hissed.
 Thus it went on—here are we now!
 It happened but we don't know how.

The EMPEROR enters accompanied by four PRINCES. The BODY-GUARDS retire.

Emperor. Now be it as it may! The battle's won! And shattered,
 Over the level plain the fleeing foes are scattered. 10850
 Here stands the empty throne; with tapestry hung round,
 The traitor's store of treasure blocks up all the ground.
 With our own bodyguards in honour due protecting,
 The people's envoys we're imperially expecting;
 Glad messages are coming in from every side, 10855
 In happy loyalty the realm is pacified.
 Though in our fight, in truth, we've been by magic aided,
 For our own selves alone we fought—so be it stated.
 To combatants, we know, chance often works some good:
 From heaven falls a stone, upon the foe rains blood, 10860
 From caves may echo strains, great wonders radiating,
 Lifting our hearts on high, the foeman's palpitating.
 Doomed to eternal scorn, the vanquished bit the sod;
 The victor, while he boasts, exalts the favouring God.
 Without command, this thanks all men unite in bringing: 10865
 "We praise Thee, God our Lord," a million throats are singing.
 It rarely happed before, but now in highest praise
 On my own grateful breast I turn my pious gaze.
 A young and merry prince may give his days to pleasure,
 But he will learn in time the moment's fitting measure. 10870
 Wherefore I choose for counsel wholly to consort
 With you four worthy men in realm and house and court.

To the FIRST PRINCE.¹

You, Prince, achieved the host's well-ordered disposition,

¹The Emperor proceeds to invest four generals with the ceremonial offices which the Golden Bull (established by Charles IV in 1356) assigned to the four lay electors of the Holy Roman Empire. According to the Bull the Duke of Saxony was appointed Arch-Marshal, the Margrave of Brandenburg Arch-Chamberlain, the Count Palatine of the Rhine Arch-Steward, and the King of Bohemia Arch-Cupbearer. The other three electors of the Empire were the Archbishops of Mainz, Trier, and Cologne, but Goethe combines the three in one and has him appear now in the one and now in the other of his dual capacity as Archbishop (10951 and later) and Arch-Chancellor (10961). Both the content and the form of the scene parody the stiff formality and the love of pomp at the court of the Holy Roman Empire as well as those at "our" Emperor's court.

Then, when the crisis came, moved it with bold precision.

Be active now in peace, just as the times suggest;

10875

Arch-Marshal you I dub and with the sword invest.

Arch-Marshal. Your army, tasked till now to keep the civil order,

When it has made your throne secure along the border,

Then at your festive throngs we'll ask it as our care

In wide ancestral halls the banquet to prepare.

10880

The bright sword I will bear before you, hold beside you,

Your Majesty Supreme, ever to guard and guide you.

Emperor [to the SECOND]. Who as a gallant man doth show a pleasing grace,

Shall be Arch-Chamberlain, no easy task and place.

The master you shall be of those of household station,

10885

Whose quarrels make their service oft a sore vexation.

You as a model to be honoured I install

To show how one can please the lord and court and all.

Arch-Chamberlain.

To further what his lord intends brings one to favour:

To help the best men on, to harm even bad ones never,

10890

Be frank and free from guile, reserved without deceit!

If you, Sire, read my heart, then is my joy complete.

But may my fancy now on to the banquet hasten?

When you go to the board, I'll hand the golden basin;

I'll hold your rings for you that so on gala days

10895

Your hands may be refreshed as I am by your gaze.

Emperor. To think about a feast, too grave I'm feeling, truly;

Yet be it! Festal moods promote glad actions duly.

To the THIRD.

I choose you as Arch-Steward. Henceforth you shall guard

The game-preserves, the manor-farm, and poultry-yard.

10900

Give me a choice of favourite foods at every season

As each month brings them forth, prepared with care and reason.

Arch-Steward. Strict fasting be my highest duty, dearest wish,

Until I've placed before you some delighting dish.

The kitchen servants all shall be with me united;

10905

What's far will be brought near, the season expedited.

True, far-fetched early things with which the board is graced,

Do not attract you. Plain and hearty fare you'd taste.

Emperor [to the FOURTH]. Since here to feasts the talk is ever-more diverted.

As cupbearer to me, young hero, be converted.

10910

Arch-Cupbearer, take care that every cave of mine

Be stored most plentifully with the best of wine.

Be temperate yourself, let not a gay occasion

Lead you to yield yourself to happy chance's suasion.

Arch-Cupbearer.

The young themselves, my prince, when trust in them is shown, 10915

Before one is aware, stand forth as men full-grown.

So I at that high feast shall duly take my station

And to your sideboard's pomp add noblest decoration,

Rare, gorgeous vessels, gold and silver, all set up.

Beforehand, though, I'll choose for you the loveliest cup:

10920

Of clear Venetian glass wherein delight lies waiting,

Enhancing wine's good taste but never inebriating.

On such a wondrous prize men oft too much depend,

But you, most noble Sire, your temperance doth defend.

Emperor. What I've designed for you in this most solemn hour,

10925

You've heard with confidence because I speak with power.

The Emperor's word is great and makes each gift secure,

Yet needs his noble script to make the matter sure;

It needs his signature. And in due form to make it,

Here comes the fitting man this fitting hour to take it.

10930

The ARCHBISHOP-ARCH-CHANCELLOR enters.

Emperor. If in the keystone doth a vaulted arch confide,

Then is it built securely against time and tide.

You see the princes four! We have but just now noted

How next the state of house and court might be promoted.

Now what the realm contains, in all its breadth enclosed,

10935

Shall be with weight and power upon you five imposed.

In lands you shall outshine all other men and orders,

So of your property I'll now extend the borders

Out of the lands once left to that disloyal band.

To you who're true I grant full many a lovely land,

10940

With this the lofty right to widen these possessions,

As chance occurs, by barter, purchases, successions,

To practise undisturbed—be this secured to you—

Whatever sovereign rights, as landlords, are your due.

As judges it's for you to make the last decisions,

10945

And these shall suffer no appeals and no revisions.

Then imposts, interest, tributes, rents, safe-conduct, toll,

Dues from the mines, salt-works, and mints, yours is the whole,

For that my gratitude be fully demonstrated,

Nearest to Majesty you have I elevated.

10950

Archbishop. In deepest gratitude to you we all unite,

You make us strong and firm and strengthen your own might.

Emperor. Yet honour to you five I'll give in fuller measure.

I still live for my realm, to live is still my pleasure;

Ancestral chains, however, draw men's gaze from hours

10955

Of swift endeavour to the doom that always lowers.

In time I too shall part from all whom I hold dear;

Then you must choose the man who shall succeed me here.

Crown him and on the holy altar lift him high;

May then peace end what now began so stormily.

10960

Arch-Chancellor. With pride at heart, yet humbly, as each mien
convinces,

Here stand, before you bowed, the first of earthly princes.

As long as loyal blood through our full veins doth thrill,

We are the body which obeys your lightest will.

Emperor. So, to conclude: what we've ordained and manifested, 10965

For all the years to come be it written and attested.

As lords, in truth, you've your possessions wholly free,

But on condition that they never parcelled be.

What you receive from us, however you expand it,

Shall to the eldest son be undivided handed. 10970

Arch-Chancellor. At once I'll put on parchment in most joyous mood

This statute weighty for the realm's and for our good;

Engrossment, seal—thus shall the chancery invest it,

Your sacred signature, the lord's, will then attest it.

Emperor. Thus I dismiss you so that each of you now may 10975

With tranquil mind reflect upon the glorious day.

The secular PRINCES withdraw.

The Archbishop [remains and speaks with feeling].

The Chancellor went away, the Bishop stays before you;

A warning spirit bids him straightway to implore you.

With deep concern for you his father's-heart doth quake.

Emperor. In this glad hour what makes you apprehensive? Speak! 10980

Archbishop. With what a bitter pang I find that in this hour

Your consecrated head's in league with Satan's power.

True—as it seems—you're on the throne, secured by right,

But woel in the Lord God's, in Father Pope's despitc.

Which when the Pontiff learns, swift judgment he'll deliver, 10985

His holy bolt will crush your sinful realm forever.

He has not yet forgot—the day that you were crowned,

A solemn time—you had the sorcerer unbound.

And from your crown, where Christian honour hung suspended,

The ray of pardon first on that damned head descended. 10990

But smite your breast, and straightway from your wicked gain

Give back a moderate mite unto the holy fane;

That broad and hilly space where your tent stood erected,

Where by an evil spirits'-league you were protected,

Where to the Prince of Lies you lent attentive ear, 10995

Devote the land to holy use in pious fear,

With hill and forest dense, as far as they're extending,

With heights all clad in green, rich luscious pasture lending,

Clear lakes alive with fish, uncounted brooks that flow

Swiftly and serpent-like and plunging as they go, 11000

Then the broad vale itself with mead and lea and hollow.

Thus is remorse expressed, and pardon soon will follow.

Emperor. My horror of this grievous fault is so profound

The borders of the land yourself shall measure round.

Archbishop. First, where one so has sinned, the spot, so desecrated, 11005

Be to the Most High's service straightway dedica'ed.

My spirit sees the massive walls mount swiftly higher;
 The morning sun's first rays already light the choir;
 The growing edifice a cross's form is taking;
 The nave grows long and high, believers' joy awaking; 11010
 Through solemn portals they stream in with ardent zeal,
 While over hill and dale resounds the bell's first peal.
 It sounds from lofty towers aspiring up to Heaven.
 Now comes the penitent to whom new life is given.
 The consecration day—oh, may it soon be sent!— 11015
 Your presence then will be the highest ornament.

Emperor. Let this great work be done, a pious proclamation
 That God the Lord I praise and seek my expiation.

Enough! I feel my soul already mounting high.

Archbishop. As Chancellor I'll conclude the last formality. 11020

Emperor. Produce a formal deed to show that I resign it
 To Holy Mother Church, and I will gladly sign it.

Archbishop [*has taken his leave but turns back as he is about to go out*].

Then to the work as it proceeds you'll not refuse
 All tribute, interest, tithes—the land's whole revenues—
 Forever. 'Twill need much for worthy sustentation 11025
 And heavy are the costs of wise administration.
 That we may build it fast on such a desert spot,
 Some gold from all your booty surely you'll allot.
 Besides, one has to have—I needs must seem insistent—
 Wood, lime, and slate, and other things from places distant. 11030
 The people will haul these, thus from the pulpit taught;
 The Church doth bless a man who serving her has wrought.

Exit.

Emperor. Great is the sin and heavy that I've loaded on me;
 These tiresome sorcerers—sore damage have they done me.

Archbishop [*returning again, with a very low obeisance*].

Pardon, O Sire, you gave that most notorious man 11035
 The empire's coast; but he'll be smitten by the ban
 Unless due penance to the Holy Church you tender
 And there tithe, interest, gifts, and revenues surrender.

Emperor [*vexed*]. The land is not yet there; far out at sea it lies.

Archbishop. A man who's right and patient sees his day arise. 11040

May your word in its strength forever be our stay!

Emperor [*alone*]. I might as well cede my whole realm this very day.

ACT V

OPEN COUNTRY

Wanderer. Yes, the lindens stand there gloomy,
Stand there yet in sturdy age,
Now again appearing to me 11045
After my long pilgrimage!
It's the old place, and still standing
Is the hut that sheltered me
When the storm-tossed billow, stranding,
Hurled me duneward from the sea! 11050
And my hosts? I fain would greet them,
Helpful folk, a valiant pair,
But today I'll scarcely meet them;
Aged in those days they were.
Pious they, in God believing! 11055
Shall I knock or raise my voice?
Hail! if you, a guest receiving,
Still in kindly deeds rejoice.

Baucis [*a little woman, very old*].
Stranger dear! Hush, hush! You're breaking
My good husband's peaceful rest. 11060
Sleeping long gives the brief waking
Of an old man active zest.

Wanderer. Tell me, mother, is it you really,
Here to take the thanks of one
Whose young life you saved so freely, 11065
You and your good spouse alone?
Are you Baucis who devoutly
My half-dying lips restored?

The husband enters.

You Philemon who so stoutly
Wrested from the wave my hoard? 11070
'Twas your hurried flames ascending,
'Twas your silver-chiming bell,
Brought to me a happy ending
Of adventure dread and fell.
Let me step forth that I may there 11075
Gaze upon the boundless sea;
Let me kneel and let me pray there,
Sore my heart oppresses me.

He strides forward on the dune.

Philemon [*to BAUCIS*]. Hasten, pray, and set the table
Where the garden blooms serene. 11080
Let him run, be dazed, unable
To believe what he'll have seen.

Standing beside the WANDERER.

Where fierce billows did maltreat you,
Where waves, wildly foaming, rolled,
There a garden now doth greet you,
Fair as Paradise of old.

11085

Older grown, I was not able

To give help as once of yore;

As my limbs grew more unstable,

Far the waves drew from the shore.

11090

Wise lords' menials, bold and daring,

Dug the trenches, dammed the sea,

Ocean's ancient rights not sparing,

Lords, instead of it, to be.

See green meadows far extending,

11095

Garden, woodland, field, and town.—

Come, enjoy the meal attending,

For the sun will soon go down.—

Sails are gliding far out yonder,

Nightly to safe ports they fare.

11100

To their nests the sea-birds wander,

For the harbour now is there.

Far away, you scarce can see it,

Lies the blue sea and its strand;

Right and left, though far may be it,

11105

Spreads a thickly-peopled land.

The three at table in the little garden.

Baucis. Silent still? and is there going

To your starved lips not a bit?

Philemon. Fain the wonder he'd be knowing;

Fond of talking, tell him it.

11110

Baucis. 'Twas a wonder if there's any!

Even today it troubles me;

For the whole thing was uncanny,

It was not as things should be.

Philemon. Can the Emperor be called sinning

11115

Who bestowed on him the strand?

Did a herald-trumpet's dinning

Not proclaim it through the land?

From our dunes a little distance

First they set foot as we've seen:

11120

Tents and huts!—Soon to existence

Springs a palace midst the green.

Baucis. Vainly slaves by day were storming,

Pick and shovel, stroke on stroke;

Where by night the flames were swarming,

11125

Stood a dike when we awoke.

Wails of human victims bleeding

Nightly to our ears were borne;

Torches toward the ocean leading,
 A canal was there at morn.
 Godless is the man; our labour,
 Grove, and cottage covets he,
 Such an overlording neighbour,
 Master of us will he be.

11130

Philemon. Be it so, he's offered to us
 Fair estate in his new land!

11135

Baucis. Little good will marsh-land do us;
 On your own height keep your stand!

Philemon. To the chapel let's awaying,
 There the sun's last rays behold,
 Ring the bell and kneeling, praying,
 Trust us to the God of old.

11140

PALACE

Spacious, ornamental garden; broad, straight canal.

FAUST, in extreme old age, walking about, reflecting.

Lynceus [the warder, through a speaking-trumpet].

The sun is setting, ships are nearing
 The safe home-port with song and cheer.
 A mighty barge is just appearing
 On the canal; 'twill soon be here.
 Their motley flags the breeze caressing,
 The rigid masts stand up to view;
 In you the seaman finds his blessing,
 And Fortunc at your prime greets you.

11145

11150

The little bell rings on the dune.

Faust [starting up]. Accursèd bell! Base clangour sending,

It wounds like spiteful shot from slings;
 Before mine eyes my realm's unending,
 Yet at my back vexation stings.

The envious bell is aye recalling:

11155

From blemish is my realm not free!
 The lindens, brown hut, church half-falling,
 Not one of these belongs to me.

And if I'd seek rest, there repairing
 I'll shudder as with alien fear,

11160

A thorn to feet and eyes, unsparing!
 Oh, would that I were far from here!

Warder [as above]. How blithely doth the gay bark glide
 Before the breeze of eventide!

How tower, as it swiftly sails,

11165

The chests and boxes, sacks and bales!

*A splendid bark, richly and variously laden with products of
 foreign countries.*

MEPHISTOPHELES. THE THREE MIGHTY COMRADES.

Chorus.

Here do we land,
 Come from on board.
 Hail to our patron,
 Hail, our Lord! 11170

They disembark; the goods are brought ashore.

Mephistopheles. We've proved ourselves as it behooves,
 Pleased if our patron but approves.
 With but two ships we sailed away,
 With twenty we're in port today,
 The great things we have done—how great, 11175
 That can be seen well from our freight.
 The free sea sets the spirit free.
 Who'll stop to think when he's at sea!
 What helps is suddenness of grip.
 You catch a fish, you catch a ship, 11180
 And when you're once the lord of three,
 You hook the fourth one easily;
 Then is the fifth in sorry plight,
 You have the Power and so the Right.
 You ask not *How* but *What* it be. 11185
 I know not how the sea is charted
 If war and trade and piracy
 Are not triune and can't be parted.

The Three Mighty Comrades.

He doesn't greet!
 He doesn't thank!
 As if we brought 11190
 Our lord what stank.
 See what a
 Wry face he has got,
 The royal wealth 11195
 Doth please him not.

Mephistopheles.

Do not await here
 Further pay;
 You took indeed
 Your share away; 11200

The Comrades.

That took we but
 As pastime fair;
 We all demand
 An equal share.

Mephistopheles.

First range in order, 11205
 Hall on hall,

The costly objects,
 One and all.
 When this rich sight
 He comes to see
 And reckons all
 More narrowly,
 A niggard he'll
 Not be at least;
 He'll give the fleet
 Feast after feast.

11210

11215

Tomorrow come the gay birds here;
 For them I shall provide good cheer.

The cargo is taken away.

Mephistopheles [to FAUST].

With gloomy gaze, with brow austere,
 Of your supreme good luck you hear.
 High wisdom has been crowned. 'Tis done,
 The shore and ocean are at one.
 Now from the shore, for their swift trips,
 The willing ocean takes the ships.
 So say what's true: from this high place
 Your arm doth all the world embrace.
 Here it began: here once there stood
 The first rude shanty made of wood.
 A little ditch was dug away
 Where busy oars now toss their spray.
 Your will, your people's industry,
 Have won the prize of earth and sea.
 From here—

11220

11225

11230

Faust. Oh, that accursèd *here!*

That is the burden hard to bear.
 Wise one, to you I must declare it.
 It gives my heart sting after sting;
 It is impossible to bear it,
 And yet I'm shamed to say the thing.
 The old folks there should make concession,
 I'd have the lindens for my throne;
 The few trees there, not my possession,
 Spoil me the world I call my own.
 There I would fain, for world-wide gazing
 From branch to branch a scaffold raising,
 Open to view the course I've run,
 That I might see all I have done,
 View at one glance, before me brought,
 The masterpiece of human thought,
 Which made a fact shrewd wisdom's plan
 And won broad dwelling-place for man.

11235

11240

11245

11250

Thus suffer we the sorest rack,

Midst riches feeling what we lack.
 The chime, the scent of linden-bloom,
 Close round me as with church and tomb.
 The power of my all-conquered will
 Breaks down before that sandy hill.
 How shall I ever free my spirit?
 The bell rings and I rage to hear it!

11255

Mephistopheles. Of course! Some paramount distress
 Must gall your life to bitterness.
 Who doubts it? To each noble ear
 That jangle seems a hostile leer.
 And that accursed bim-bam-booming,
 The cheerful evening sky be-gloom-
 Mingles in each event that passes,
 From the first bath to burial-masses,
 As if all mortal life should seem,
 Twixt *bim* and *bam*, a vanished dream.

11260

Faust. Their opposition, stubbornness,
 Spoil the most glorious success,
 Till in deep, angry pain one must
 At last grow tired of being just.

11270

Mephistopheles. Why are you troubling? temporizing?
 Aren't you long used to colonizing?

Faust. Then go and shift them to one side!
 You know the farm—it's small but fair—
 I've chosen for the agèd pair.

11275

Mephistopheles. We'll bear them off and on new ground
 They'll stand before one looks around.
 For violence that's past and done
 A pretty dwelling will atone.

11280

He whistles shrilly. THE THREE enter.

Mephistopheles. Come! Do the lord's command—'tis meet!—
 Tomorrow he will feast the fleet.

The Three. The old lord gave us naught but slights;
 A feast that's fleet is ours by rights.

11285

Exeunt.

Mephistopheles [to the spectators]. Here haps a hap of long ago;
 With Naboth's vineyard it happened so. (*1 Kings 21*)

DEEP NIGHT

Lynceus [the warder singing on the watch-tower of the castle].

Keen vision my dower,
 Placed here for my sight,
 And sworn to the tower,
 In the world I delight.
 I gaze at the far,
 I look at the near,

11290

THE SECOND PART, V

275

The moon and the star,
The wood and the deer.
In all things around me
Is grace without end,
And as they astound me,
Myself I commend.
Thou fortunate vision,
Thou mayest have seen
Whatever there may be,
Yet fair hath it been.

11295

11300

Pause.

But not only to delight me
Am I stationed here on high;
What a gruesome sight, to fright me,
Threatens from the dark world nigh!
Flashing sparkles I see gushing
Through the lindens' twofold night;
Ever stronger rages, rushing,
Fanned by draughts, a glowing light.
Ah! inside the cabin's flaming,
Though moss-grown and damp it stand;
Speedy succour is it claiming
And no rescue is at hand.
Ah, those good old folk whom duty
Once made careful of the fire,
Now of smoke become the booty!
What a misadventure dire!
Flames are flaring, now they wave them
Through the black, moss-covered shell;
Could the good folk only save them
From that furious burning hell!
Brilliant tongues of flame are flashing,
Through the leaves and branches lashing;
Withered boughs that flare up, burning,
Swiftly glow, plunge from the tree.
Must ye eyes—such things discerning—
Must I, so far-sighted be?
Down the little chapel crashes,
Burdened under branches' fall.
Winding upward, pointed flashes
Seize upon the tree-tops tall.
To their roots the trunks, ignited,
Hollow, purple-red, glow on.

11305

11310

11315

11320

11325

11330

11335

Long pause. Song.

Gone what once the eye delighted,
With the centuries is gone.

Faust [on the balcony, facing the dunes].
What song hear I of lamentation?

Too late, the word or tone to heed.
 My warder wails, and deep vexation
 Stirs me for this impulsive deed.
 Yet though the lindens, grown so thickly,
 Now half-charred trunks, defile the place,
 An outlook-point is builded quickly,
 Where I can gaze through endless space.
 Thence too I'll see the new-made dwelling
 Which for that agèd pair I'll raise,
 Who, of my kind forbearance telling,
 Will there enjoy their latter days.

11340

11345

Mephistopheles and The Three [below].

Here we're coming at full trot,
 But pardon us! well went it not.
 We rapped on it, we chapped on it,
 And still not opened was a slit;
 We rattled on, we pounded more,
 Till down there lay the rotten door.
 We called, a loud and threatening call,
 But found no hearing there at all.
 As in such case has oft occurred,
 They would not, so they had not heard.
 We tarried not long thereabout;
 Swift, as you bade, we cleared them out.
 The couple suffered scarce a jot;
 From fright they fell dead on the spot.
 A stranger, hid there, made a show
 Of fight but he was soon laid low.
 But in the bric and furious fray,
 From embers that around us lay,
 The straw caught fire. It's blazing free,
 A funeral pyre for all the three.

11350

11355

11360

11365

Faust. To my commands then deal were ye?
 Exchange I meant, not robbery.
 This unconsidered, savage blow,
 I curse it! Share the curse and go!

11370

Chorus. The old saw says—it echoes still—
 To violence submit thy will!
 If bold and steadfast, stake thy pelf,
 Thy house and home and—thine own self.
Exeunt.

11375

Faust [on the balcony].

The stars conceal their light and glow,
 The fire is sinking, flickering low;
 A cool wind fans it with its wings.
 Vapour and smoke it hither brings.
 Rash the command, too quick obeyed!—
 What hovers hither like a shade?

11380

MIDNIGHT

FOUR GREY WOMEN *enter*.

First. My name, it is Want.

Second. And my name is Guilt.

Third. My name, it is Worry.

Fourth. And mine is Distress. 11385

Three Together. The door is locked fast, we cannot get in:

A rich man dwells there, we may not go in.

Want. Here I turn to shadow.

Guilt. Here I cease to be.

Distress. The pampered ones turn their faces from me.

Worry. Ye sisters, ye cannot, may not go within 11390

But even at the keyhole will Worry slip in.

WORRY vanishes.

Want. Grey sisters, away! Ye must vanish from here!

Guilt. I'll bind me beside thee and keep me quite near.

Distress. Distress keepeth pace with you, still as a breath.

The Three. Fast gather the clouds, they blot out each star! 11395

Behind there! behind! From afar, from afar,

There cometh our brother, there cometh he . . . Death.

Exeunt.

Faust [in the palace]. Four saw I come and only three go hence;

Of what they said I could not grasp the sense.

"Distress" one seemed to say—'twas like a breath— 11400

A gloomy word then followed—"Death."

Hollow the sound, with spectral message fraught.

My way to freedom I have not yet fought.

Could I all magic from my pathway banish,

Could quite unlearn its spells and bid it vanish 11405

Nature, could I face thee, in thy great plan,

Then were it worth the pain to be a man.

Such was I once ere I the gloom explored

And cursed me and the world with impious word.

The air so teems with many a ghostly shape, 11410

No way appears whereby one may escape.

If one day, bright with reason, on us beams,

The night entangles us in webs of dreams.

From young green fields we homeward turn, elate;

A bird croaks, and his croaking tells—ill-fate. 11415

Thus superstitions all our hours entwine,

With happening, with warning, or with sign.

And thus abashed, we find ourselves alone.

The portal creaks, and no one enters—none!

Agitated.

Is someone here?

Worry. The question claims an "Aye!" 11420

Faust. And thou, who art thou then?

Worry. Enough!—'Tis I.

Faust. Away! Begone!

Worry. I am where I should be.

Faust [*first furious, then appeased, to himself*].

Take care and say no word of sorcery.

Worry.

Though the ear hear not my droning,

Yet the heart doth feel it, moaning.

11425

In a variable guise

Cruel force I exercise.

On the pathway, on the billow,

Ever-agonizing fellow,

Always found though never sought,

11430

Flattered, cursed, in word and thought.

Is Worry still to thee unknown?

Faust. Through the world I have but flown.

Whatever I craved, I seized it by the hair,

Whatever sufficed not, I let fare.

11435

Whatever escaped, I let it go.

I've but desired and but achieved, each hour,

And then again have wished, and so with power

Stormed through my life; at first with power and greatness;

But now life moves with cautious, wise sedateness.

11440

Well do I know the sphere of earth and men.

The view beyond is barred to mortal ken;

A fool! who thither turns his blinking eyes

And dreams he'll find his like above the skies.

Let him stand fast and look around on earth;

11445

Not mute is this world to a man of worth.

Why need he range through all eternity?

Here he can seize all that he knows to be.

Thus let him wander down his earthly day;

When spirits spook, let him pursue his way;

11450

Let him find pain and bliss as on he stride,

He! every moment still unsatisfied.

Worry.

Whom I once possess will ever

Find the world not worth endeavour;

Endless gloom around him being,

11455

Rise nor set of sun he's seeing.

Be each outer sense excelling,

Still is darkness in him dwelling;

He cannot through any measures

Make him lord of any treasures.

11460

All luck turns into caprices;

Him midst plenty hunger seizes.

Be it joy or be it sorrow,

THE SECOND PART, V

279

He postpones it till the morrow,
Waiting for the future ever
And therefore achieving never.

11465

Faust. Be still! Not so wilt thou get hold of me!
I do not care to hear such drivel.
Begone! That wretched litaney
Could even befoul the wisest man to evil.

11470

Worry.

Go or come? How shall he guide him?
All decision is denied him;
Though with but a smooth road coping,
He takes half-steps, wavering, groping,
Wandering as if bemisted,
Everything he sees as twisted;
Burdening himself and others,
Breathing deeply, still he smothers,
Though not smothered, lifeless faring,
Not resigned and not despairing.
Rolling on without remission,
Painful quitting, loath submission,
Freedom now, now subjugation,
Semi-sleep, poor recreation,
Bind him fast within his cell
And prepare the wretch for Hell!

11475

11480

11485

Faust. Ill-omened spectres, ye! Thus mangle ye still
The human race on thousands of occasions;
Indifferent days themselves entangle ye still
In a vile web of mingled tribulations.
It's hard, I know, from spirits to get free;
The strenuous spirit-tie we cannot sever.
Still, Worry, though it great and stealthy be,
Thy power I shall not acknowledge ever.

11490

Worry.

Then learn it now. My parting curse thou'lt find
Swift and forever thee attending.
Throughout their lives are mortals blind;
So, Faustus, be thou too at thy life's ending!

11495

She breathes on him and goes.

Faust [blinded]. Night presses round me, deep and deeper
still.

And yet within me beams a radiant light;
What I have planned, I hasten to fulfil;
Only the master's word has weight and might.
Up from your couches, vassals, every man!
Bring happily to sight my daring plan.

11500

Seize shovel, spade! With all your tools lay on! 11505
 The work staked out must with all speed be done.
 Strict order and swift diligence
 Result in fairest recompense.
 To consummate the greatest enterprises
 One spirit for a thousand hands suffices. 11510

GREAT OUTER COURT OF THE PALACE

Torches

Mephistopheles [as overseer, leading the way].

This way, this way! Come on, come on,
 Lemurs,¹ ye shambling creatures,
 Of tendons, sinews, and of bones
 Ye patched-up semi-natures.

Lemurs [in chorus].

We come at once, are at your hand, 11515
 And it's our half-impression
 The call concerns a spacious land
 Where we shall have possession.
 The pointed stakes, here are they all,
 Long chains with which to measure;
 But we've forgotten why the call 11520
 Came to disturb our leisure.

Mephistopheles. An artist's zeal would here be wrong;

You need no measure but your brothers'.
 Let him who's longest lay his length along, 11525
 And you, lift up the turf round here, you others.
 As for our fathers it was done,
 Dig out a square, a longish one!
 Out of the palace to the narrow home,
 So stupidly at last the end doth come. 11530

Lemurs [digging with mocking gestures].

When I was young and lived and loved,
 Methought it very sweet,
 When joy rang out and all was gay,
 Then merrily went my feet.

But now Old Age with his stealthy steps 11535
 Hath clawed me with his crutch;
 Over a grave's door stumbled I,
 Why yawned the door so much?

Faust [coming out of the palace, gropes his way by the door-posts].

The click of spades—ah, how it heartens me!
 It is my crowd that toils the while, 11540

¹Wicked dead.

Earth with itself to reconcile,
To set fixed limits to the sea
And gird it with a rigid zone.

Mephistopheles [*aside*]. And yet you work for us alone

While you for dikes and pens are caring, 11545

Since now for Neptune you're preparing—

That Devil of the Sea—a great repast.

In every way you're lost and lorn;

To aid us every element is sworn,

And ruin is the end at last.

11550

Faust. Overseer!

Mephistopheles. Here!

Faust. Be it done as it may,

Bring crowd on crowd of workmen here!

Spur them with rigour and good cheer,

Entice, coerce, give ample pay!

I wish each day fresh news of what's been done,

11555

How the groove lengthens that we have begun.

Mephistopheles [*half aloud*]. The talk was—when the news they
gave—

Not of a groove but of a grave.

Faust. A marsh extends along the mountain-chain

That poisons what so far I've been achieving;

11560

Were I that noisome pool to drain,

'Twould be the highest, last achieving.

Thus space to many millions I will give

Where, though not safe, yet free and active they may live.

Green fertile fields where straightway from their birth

11565

Both men and beast live happy on the newest earth,

Settled forthwith along the mighty hill

Raised by a daring, busy people's will.

Within, a land like Paradise; outside,

Up to the brink may rage the mighty tide,

11570

And where it gnaws and would burst through or sap,

A common impulse hastes to close the gap.

Yes, to this thought I hold unswerving,

To wisdom's final fruit, profoundly true:

Of freedom and of life he only is deserving

11575

Who every day must conquer them anew.

Thus here, by danger girt, the active day

Of childhood, manhood, age will pass away.

Aye! such a throng I fain would see,

Stand on free soil among a people free.

11580

Then might I say, that moment seeing:

"Ah, linger on, thou art so fair!"

The traces of my earthly being

Can perish not in æons—they are there!

That lofty moment I now feel in this:

11585

I now enjoy the highest moment's bliss.

FAUST *sinks back, the LEMURS take him up and lay him on the ground.*

Mephistopheles. Him could no pleasure sate, suffice no bliss,

So wooed he ever changeful phantoms' favour.

The last vile, empty moment—this!—

The poor wretch wished to hold it fast forever.

11590

Him who against me stoutly held his stand,

Time conquers—here the old man lies in sand.

The clock stands still—

Chorus. Stands still! No sound is heard.

The clock's hand falls.

Mephistopheles. It falls, 'tis finished.

Chorus. 'Tis past.

Mephistopheles. "Past"—'tis a stupid word.

11595

Past—why?

Past and pure Naught, sheer Uniformity!

Of what avail's perpetual creation

If later swept off to annihilation?

"So it is past!" You see what that must mean?

11600

It is the same as had it never been,

And yet whirls on as if it weren't destroyed.

I should prefer the Everlasting Void.

BURIAL

Lemur Solo.

Who hath so badly built the house

With shovel and with spade?

11605

Lemurs Chorus.

For thee, dull guest, in hempen vest,

It all too well was made.¹

Lemur Solo.

Who hath so badly decked the hall?

Not chairs, not table, any!

Lemurs Chorus.

'Twas loaned for a short interval;

11610

The creditors are so many.

Mephistopheles. The body lies, and ere the spirit flee,

I'll quickly show the blood-writ scroll;

But they've so many means—alas for me!—

To cheat the Devil out of many a soul.

11615

If one pursues the old way, one's resisted,

And to the new we do not feel commended;

I could of old have done it unattended,

But now I have to be assisted.

In all things, wretched is our plight!

11620

¹For lines 11604-7, cf. the third stanza of the Grave-diggers' Song in *Hamlet*.

Transmitted custom, ancient right—

Naught's to be trusted now as in the past.

The soul once with its last breath left its house;

I watched my prey, and like the swiftest mouse,

Snap! in my firm-shut claws I held it fast.

11625

Now it delays, won't quit the dismal place,

The wretched corpse's house so nauseating;

The elements, each other hating,

Will finally expel it in disgrace.

And though for days I fret till I am weary,

11630

When? how? and where? that is the tiresome query.

In power swift and strong Old Death's played out;

Even the *whether* long has been in doubt.

With lust I've often watched the rigid members—

'Twas but a sham; they moved: life stirred the embers.

11635

Gestures of conjuration like those of a fantastic fogleman.

Lords of the straight, lords of the crooked horn,

Come quick! in double time! and show your fettle,

You of old diabolic cut and metal,

And with you let the maw of Hell be borne.

11640

True, many maws hath Hell, in short,

To use as due to rank and dignity;

But henceforth in this final sport

Not so particular shall we be.

The horrible maw of Hell opens up on the left.

Tusks yawn; and from the vaulted gorge profound

The furious, fiery torrents flow,

11645

And at the rear, in seething vapours wound,

I see the flaming city in eternal glow.

Up to the very teeth the crimson billow dashes,

The damned, in hope of help, swim into view;

But now the huge hyena bites and gnashes,

11650

And their hot course the agonized renew.

Much more is left to spy in corners there,

In narrowest space horrors supremel

You do well, sinners to affright and scare,

But they'll think it a lie and sham and dream.

11655

To the fat devils with short, straight horns.

You fat-paunched rogues with cheeks like hell-fire burning,

You glow so fattened by Hell's sulphur and its steam;

What necks, so thick-set, short, and never turning!

Watch here below for phosphorescent gleam:

That's the wee soul, Psyche with fluttering wing;

11660

Don't pluck the wings, 'twere else a nasty worm.

I'll stamp my seal upon the beastly thing,¹

Then off with it in whirling-fiery-storm.

These lower regions, watch them duly,

¹Cf. Revelation, 16. 2; 19. 20.

You bladders—that's the duty you've to show; 11665
 If it was pleased to live there, truly,
 That we do not so accurately know.
 It feels at home in navels, there's no doubt;
 So heed my words, for there it may pop out.

To the lean devils with long, crookèd horns.

You clowns, huge fuglemen, bashaws, 11670
 Clutch at the air—no respite take or give;
 Stretch out your arms, show your sharp claws,
 That you may catch the fluttering fugitive.
 In its old home bad surely is its plight;
 Genius is quick to soar, so too will be this sprite. 11675

Glory, from above, on the right.

A Heavenly Host.

Heavenly kindred,
 Envoys unhind' red,
 Follow in flight:
 Sinners forgiving,
 Making dust living! 11680
 Bring while ye're swaying,
 Lingering, staying,
 To all things living
 A trace of delight.

Mephistopheles. Discords I hear, a most disgusting humming 11685
 That with unwelcome light comes from above;
 It is that boyish-girlish bungling strumming
 That sanctimonious tastes are prone to love.
 You know how we in deep depraved hours
 Planned the destruction of the human race; 11690
 The shamefullest we planned with all our powers
 In their devotion finds a perfect place.

The canting tribe, they come in foppish fettle!
 Many they've snatched away before our eyes;
 With our own weapons are they giving battle; 11695
 They're devils too, though in disguise.
 If you lose here, in endless shame you'll sink;
 On to the grave and hold fast by the brink!

Chorus of Angels [strewing roses].

Roses, ye glowing ones,
 Balsam-bestowing ones, 11700
 Fluttering and soaring,
 Sweet life restoring,
 Branchlets revealing,
 Fresh buds unsealing,
 Blooming be scen! 11705

Springtime, awake him
 In purple and green;
 Paradisc take him,
 The sleeper serene.

Mephistopheles [to the SATANS].

Why duck and jerk? Is that Hell's wonted rule? 11710

Do stand your ground and let them scatter.

Back to his place, each gawky fool!

They think perhaps that with such flowery matter

They'll snow hot devils in and make them cool.

Your breath will melt and shrivel it.—Now puff, 11715

You puffers!—Hold! It is enough, enough!

Your foul breath bleaches all the fluttering stuff.—

Be not so violent! Shut your jaws and noses!

You've blown indeed too strongly at the roses.

Oh, that the proper measure you would ever learn! 11720

They shrivel—yes, they scorch, they char, they burn!

With poisonous bright flames they're floating hither.

Stand fast against them and press close together!

Your strength dies out, your courage is all spent!

A strange, voluptuous glow the devils scent. 11725

Chorus of Angels.

Blossoms ethereal,

Flamelets empyreal,

Love now are bearing they,

Bliss are preparing they,

All hearts they sway. 11730

Words of true charity

In ether's clarity,

Bring hosts in verity

Infinite day.

Mephistopheles. Oh, curses, shame on such an idiot band! 11735

Upon their heads the Satans stand.

Head over heels fat ones are curving,

Plunging in Hell ass-uppermost.

So be your bath as hot as you're deserving!

But I'll remain here at my post. 11740

Fighting the hovering roses.

Off, will-o'-the-wisp! However bright your flake,

When caught, you're but a sticky, filthy cake.

Why flutter thus? Away with you and quick!—

Like pitch and sulphur they cling to my neck.

Chorus of Angels.

What ye've no title to,

Ye may not share it;

What bringeth pain to you,

11745

Ye must forbear it.
 If we'll press in with might,
 Valiantly must we fight. 11750
 Only the loving
 Does Love lead to light.

Mephistopheles. My head burns, heart and liver too. I scent
 A more than devilish element,
 Sharper by far than Hell's own fire!— 11755

And hence your wailing, monstrous, dire,
 You haplessly enamoured! who, when spurned,
 Toward your darlings keep your faces turned.

I too! What draws my head in that direction?
 Am I not sworn to its complete rejection? 11760

To see it I was once so bitterly aversel
 Has something alien pierced me through and through?
 Now these most charming youths I love to view.

What holds me back that I can't curse!—
 And if I let myself be fooled and baited, 11765

Who henceforth fool-in-chief will be?
 The stunning rascals whom I've always hated,
 Charming beyond words do they seem to me!—

Tell me, sweet children, that I may not miss you!
 Aren't you too of the race of Lucifer? 11770

You are so fair I'd truly like to kiss you;
 To say you come just right, I scarcely err.

I feel so much at home, so natural,
 As though we'd met a thousand times before;
 So stealthy, kitten-like, desirable, 11775

At every glance your beauty charms me more.

Oh, do draw near! Grant me one glance, I pray!

Angels. We're coming now, why do you shrink away?

We're drawing near, remain now if you can.

The ANGELS hover around and occupy the whole space.

Mephistopheles [crowded into the proscenium].

You call us damnèd spirits! You, 11780

You are yourselves the wizards true,

For you seduce both maid and man.

Oh, what a damnable event!

Is this indeed love's element?

A raging fire fills all my frame, 11785

My neck scarce feels the scorching flame.—

You hover to and fro—come down, I say,

Bestir your lovely limbs in a more worldly way;

In truth, it suits you well, that serious style,

But just for once I'd like to see you smile! 11790

'Twould be for me eternally entrancing.

I mean like lovers at each other glancing,

A flicker round the mouth, done easily.

You tall boy, you would I possess most gladly;

That priestly mien befits you very badly,

11795

Do look at me a little lustfully!

More nude, yet decently, could you appear,

That flowing shirt is over-moralizing—

They turn around—To see them from the rear!

The little rogues are quite too appetizing.

11800

Chorus of Angels.

Flames, love revealing,

Grow ever clearer;

To damned through error

May truth bring healing,

That they from evil

11805

Find glad retrieval,

In the All-Unity

Blessèd to be.

Mephistopheles [*recovering his self-possession*].

What's happ'ning to me!—Like Job I've boil on boil

From head to foot so that I shrink to view me,

11810

Yet triumph still when I search through and through me

And place my trust in my own self and kin.

My noble parts are saved despite the broil;

The love-spell works no deeper than the skin.

Now are the damned flames burned out past recall,

11815

And as is right, I curse you one and all!

Chorus of Angels.

Ardours of Heaven!

Round whom they brood,

In life is given

Bliss with the Good.

11820

Laud ye together,

Rise to your goal;

Cleansed is the ether,

Breathe thou, O Soul!

They rise aloft, bearing away FAUST's immortal part.

Mephistopheles [*looking around*].

How's this?—Where have they gone, I wonder?

11825

You have surprised me, young folk though you be,

And flown away to Heaven with the plunder.

Hence played they round this grave so wantonly!

A treasure great, unique, they've confiscated.

The lofty soul, to me hypothecated,

11830

Out of my hands they've smuggled craftily.

To whom now shall my sad case be presented?

Who'll get for me my well-earned right?

In your old age you have been circumvented,
 But you deserved it, wretched is your plight. 11835
 I have mismanaged in disgraceful fashion;
 Great outlay shamefully I've thrown away.
 A vulgar lust, an absurd, lovesick passion,
 Led the well-seasoned Devil far astray.
 Since with this childish, silly folderol 11840
 I—shrewd and would-be wise—obsessed me,
 In very truth the folly is not small
 That in conclusion has possessed me.

MOUNTAIN GORGES

FOREST, ROCKS, DESERT

HOLY ANCHORITES *scattered up the mountain-side,*
dwelling among the clefts.

Chorus and Echo.

Forests are swaying here,
 Rocks weight them downward sheer, 11845
 Roots clutching rocks appear,
 Trunk close by trunk is near.
 Wave dashes after wave,
 Shelter hath deepest cave.
 Lions, soft-footed, dumb, 11850
 Friendly around us come,
 Honouring the sacred place,
 Refuge of love and grace.

Pater Ecstaticus [hovering up and down].

Endless ecstatic fire,
 Glow of pure love's desire, 11855
 Pangs of the yearning breast,
 Rapture in God to rest.
 Arrows, pierce through me here,
 Lances, subdue me here,
 Bludgeons, come, batter me, 11860
 Lightnings, come, shatter me,
 That my mortality
 Flee from reality,
 Endless star shine above,
 Core of eternal love. 11865

Pater Profundus [Lower Region].

As chasms at my feet descending
 Burden the chasms more profound,
 As a thousand radiant streams are wending
 To foaming cataracts' awesome bound,

THE SECOND PART, V

289

As, by its own strong impulse driven,
The tree mounts upward, straight and tall,
So to Almighty Love 'tis given
To fashion all, to cherish all.

11870

All round me is a savage roaring
As if swayed wood and rocky steep;
Yet plunges, lovely in its pouring,
The wealth of water to the deep,
Summoned below, the vale to brighten,
The bolt that fell with sudden flare,
The atmosphere to cleanse and lighten
Which in its bosom poison bare,

11875

11880

Heralds of love are they, proclaiming
Creative powers that us enfold.
May they, my inner self inflaming,
Quicken my soul confused and cold,
Its blunted senses galled unceasing,
Bound fast in chains that cramp and smart.
O God! these thoughts of mine appeasing,
Illumine Thou my needy heart!

11885

Pater Seraphicus [Middle Region].

What a morning cloudlet hovers
Through the pine trees' tossing hair!
Do I guess what life it covers?
They are spirits young and fair.

11890

Chorus of Blessed Boys.

Tell us, father, whither go we?
Tell us, kind one, who are we?
Happy are we all, that know we;
Sweet, oh, sweet it is to be.

11895

Pater Seraphicus.

Boys! At midnight born, with only
Haltway opened sense and brain,
Straightway lost to parents lonely,
For the angels sweetest gain.
If ye feel that in this place is
One who loves, then hither fare;
But of earth's rude ways no traces
Do ye happy spirits bear.
In mine eyes descend, pray choose them,
Organs meet for earthly sphere;
As your own eyes ye can use them,
Gaze upon this landscape here.

11900

11905

He receives them into himself.

Those are trees, and cliffs are yonder,
There a stream that downward leaps,

11910

Rolling with the voice of thunder
Down its short way to the deeps.

Blessèd Boys [from within].

Grand the scene to which we're waking,
But too full of gloom and woe; 11915
We're from fright and terror quaking,
Noble, kind one, let us go!

Pater Seraphicus.

On to higher spheres ascending,
Unawares grow endlessly,
As in fashion pure, unending, 11920
God's high presence strengthens thee.
That is spirits' sustentation,
In free ether all effecting,
Endless loving's revelation,
To beatitude perfecting. 11925

Chorus of Blessèd Boys [circling round the highest peaks].

Hand in hand clinging,
In a glad ring unite,
Soaring and singing,
Feeling a pure delight.
Godlike the yearning, 11930
Confident be;
For whom we're yearning,
Him shall ye see.

Angels [soaring in the higher atmosphere, bearing FAUST's immortal part].

Lo! rescued is this noble one
From evil machination; 11935
"Who e'er aspiring, struggles on,
For him there is salvation."
And if to him Celestial Love
Its favouring grace has given,
The Blessèd Host comes from Above 11940
And welcomes him to Heaven.

The Younger Angels.

Roses sainted women spendled,
Penitent through mercy glorious,
Helped to make the fight victorious,
That the lofty work be ended, 11945
That be won this spirit-treasure.
Demons shrank in sore displeasure,
Devils fled the roses' flinging.
Not with wonted hell-pangs stinging,

THE SECOND PART, V

291

Love-pangs brought them to disaster
Even the old Satan-Master
By sharp pain was penetrated.
Shout with joy! It's consummated!

11950

The More Perfected Angels.

Still earthly rests remain
Which have oppressed us;
They'd not be pure of stain,
Though of asbestos.
When every element
Strong spirit-forces
Have borne away and blent,
No angel divorces
The natures two in one,
So close they weave them;
Eternal Love alone
Can ever cleave them.

11955

11960

11965

The Younger Angels.

Mist-like round yonder height,
I'm just discovering
Where in approaching flight
Spirit-life's hovering.
The clouds are growing clear,
I see a host draw near
Of Blessèd Boys,
Freed from the stress of earth,
Circling, united!
They taste the joys
Of spring in their new birth,
Therein delighted.
Let him at once begin
Perfected joy to win,
With these united!

11970

11975

11980

The Blessèd Boys.

Glad we're receiving now
Him as a chrysalis,
Thereby achieving now
Pledge of angelic bliss.
Loosen all earthly flakes
That cling around him;
Fair and great now he wakes,
Divine life has crowned him.

11985

Doctor Marianus [in the highest, purest cell].

Here is the outlook free,
The soul uplifting.
Women I yonder see,

11990

Heavenward drifting,
 And glorious, midway seen,
 Star-crowned, yet tender,
 Heaven's own lofty Queen! 11995
 It is Her splendour.

Enraptured.

Highest mistress of the world,
 Let me, of Thy pleasure,
 See Thy mystery unfurled
 In the vaulted azure. 12000

Look with grace on what doth move
 Human hearts to greet Thee
 And with holy bliss of love
 Bears them up to meet Thee.

All invincible we feel 12005
 When supreme Thou willest,
 Swiftly tempered is our zeal
 When its glow Thou stillest.
 Virgin, pure in fairest sense,
 Mother sweet, supernal, 12010
 Chosen Queen of our defence,
 Peer of gods eternal!

Little clouds circle
 Around Her splendour:
 Penitent women, 12015
 Of natures tender,
 Ether respiring,
 At Her knees pleading,
 Her mercy needing.

O Thou of immaculate ray, 12020
 From Thee 'tis not taken
 That those lightly led astray
 Come with trust unshaken.

Rapt away, to weakness prone,
 It is hard to save them. 12025
 Who by their own strength alone
 Rend the lusts that slave them?
 Whose foot does not slip awhile
 On steep, slippery places?
 Whom befool not glance and smile, 12030
 Flattery's breath and phrases?

The MÄTER GLORIOSA soars into view.

Chorus of Penitent Women.

To heights art soaring
 Of realms eternal,
 Hear our imploring,
 Matchless, Maternal, 12035
 Of grace supernal!

Magna Peccatrix (*St. Luke, 7. 36*).

By the love that ever glowing
For Thy Son, the Heaven-born,
Shed warm tears to balsam flowing
Spite of Pharisaic scorn; 12040
By the box whose ointment precious
Dropped its perfume rare and sweet;
By the locks whose gentle meshes
Dried the Saviour's holy feet—

Mulier Samaritana (*St. John, 4*).

By the well to which were driven 12045
Abram's herds in days of yore;
By the pitcher once 'twas given
Our dear Saviour to restore;
By the spring, rich and supernal,
Whence flow waters far and wide, 12050
Overflowing, bright, eternal,
Pouring through the worlds their tide—

*Maria Aegyptiaca*¹ (*Acta Sanctorum*).

By the sacred place where mortals
Our dear Master's body laid;
By the arm which at the portals 12055
Warningly my entrance stayed;
By the forty years' repentance
Truly passed in desert-land;
By the blessed farewell sentence
That I wrote upon the sand— 12060

All Three.

Thou who women greatly sinning
Grantest to come nigh to Thee,
By sincere repentance winning
Bliss through all eternity,
Grant to this good soul Thy blessing, 12065
Who but once herself forgot,
Who knew not she was transgressing,
Pardon meet refuse Thou not!

Una Pœnitentium [*formerly named GRETCHEN, drawing closer*].

Bend, oh bend now,
Matchless, attend Thou, 12070
Thy radiance spend now,
Look on my bliss in charity.
My early lover,
His troubles over,
Comes back to me. 12075

¹Like Mary Magdalen and the Woman of Samaria, Mary of Egypt had committed the sin of sensuality.

Blessèd Boys [hovering in a circle].

Mighty of limb, he towers
 Already above us;
 Soon for this care of ours
 Richly he'll love us.
 Early were we removed, 12080
 Life did not reach us;
 But he has learned and loved
 And he will teach us.

The One Penitent [formerly named GRETCHEN].

Girt by the noble choir of Heaven,
 Himself the new-come scarcely knows, 12085
 Scarce feels the fresh life newly given
 Ere like the holy throng he grows;
 See! how each earthly bond he's riven,
 From that old vesture freed at length,
 Now in ethereal garb of Heaven 12090
 Appears his pristine, youthful strength,
 Oh, grant that I may now instruct him,
 Since blinds him still the new-born day.

Mater Gloriosa. Come, rise to higher spheres! Conduct him!

If he feels thee, he'll go thy way. 12095

Doctor Marianus [prostrate, adoring].

Penitents, look up, elate,
 Where ye see salvation;
 Grateful, to you blessèd fate
 Grow through re-creation.
 May each better sense be keen 12100
 In Thy service precious;
 O Thou Virgin, Mother, Queen,
 Goddess, be Thou gracious!

Chorus Mysticus.

All earth comprises
 Is symbol alone; 12105
 What there ne'er suffices
 As fact here is known;
 All past the humanly
 Wrought here in love;
 The Eternal-Womanly 12110
 Draws us above.

FINIS

